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CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEWTON CENTRE.

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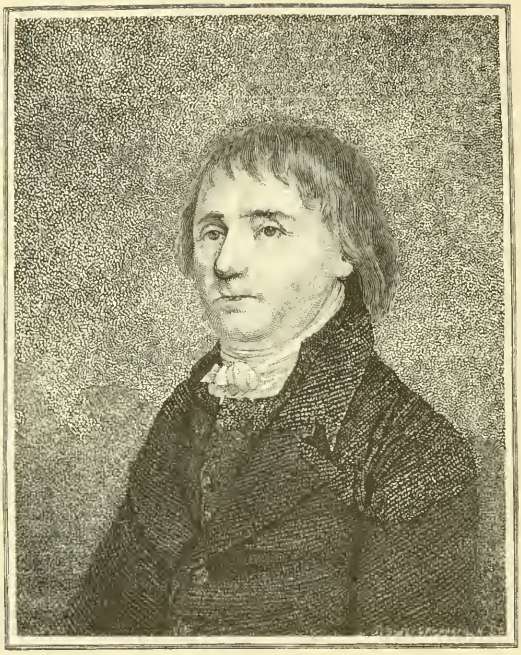

Rev. JOSEPH GRAFTON.

In the early spring of 1880, the Baptist Church at Newton Centre decided to celebrate its centennial anniversary with appropriate exercises, and appointed the pastor, Rev. W. N. Clarke, D.D., with the following brethren,— Rev. Alvah Hovey, D.D., LL.D., Deacon James N. Newell, A.M., John H. Sanborn, George Warren, and Frank Edmands,— a committee to recommend a time and order of exercises for the occasion. This committee reported in favor of holding the anniversary on the 5th of July, the day of the organization of the church one hundred years before, and were authorized to complete the arrangement for services on that day. But, owing to the resignation of Dr. Clarke and his removal to Montreal, Province of Quebec, as well as to the circumstance that the 5th of July was to be observed by the people as a national holiday instead of the 4th, it was deemed expedient to postpone the centennial services until the 14th of November.

MORNING SERVICE.

ORGAN VOLUNTARY.

MUSIC. INVOCATION.

HYMN.

READING SCRIPTURES, ... Rev. R. S. MILLS, D.D.

PRAYER, ... Rev. O. S. STEARNS, D.D.

HYMN.

HISTORICAL DISCOURSE, ... Rev. W. N. CLARKE, D.D.
Pastor from 1869 to 1880.

PRAYER. HYMN.

BENEDICTION.

HISTORICAL DISCOURSE.

BY REV. W. N. CLARKE, D.D.,

Pastor from 1869 to 1880.

PSALM lxiii., 7. — Because Thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice.

AT a time when we look back and look forward, no language seems more suitable to express our prevailing sentiment than this language of grateful remembrance and joyful trust. Therefore, I place it at the head of this historical discourse. But times and manners have changed since the half-century sermon of this church was preached by Father Grafton, and the preacher of to-day will not be expected to follow his example. He took for his text the words of Balaam, "Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel; according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought!" He briefly told the story of Balaam, and then deduced from his text as a theme, "the safety of God's people," which he discussed under two divisions and three subdivisions, occupying thus with his preliminary sermon more than a third of his time. For us, the sentiment of our text will be sufficient, without the sermon: God grant that the gratitude and the trust may both be ours, and in this spirit we will proceed at once to our work.

The First Baptist Church of Newton was one of the later results of the great work that made New England spiritually new. After a long period of slumber came that which is known as the Great Awakening; and the event well deserves the name. It is impossible to tell exactly when the gracious revival began, but from 1740, when Whitefield came, it became general, reaching almost the whole country. The joy of spiritual prosperity, however, was not unmixed; for the new work of grace was very exacting, and there were many who would not accept its influence. The call that went forth to churches and to ministers was a call to repentance and reformation. It was only natural that some should reject such a call as needless, fantastic, and fanatical, and should set their faces against all the new demands. Accordingly, the aggressive reformers in many places felt themselves compelled to withdraw from the existing churches, and to organize "Separate" churches, as they were called, in which the spirit of the Great Awakening might find a more congenial home. The influence of the great revival does not appear to have been very extensive, either in Newton or in Brookline; though in Newton, at least, the new spirit was not indignantly rejected, as it was in many places. But there sprung up in Brookline a Separate church, which first appears about 1750. Jonathan Hyde was its pastor,— a kinsman, though not an ancestor, of the Hydes who are now in Newton. In 1753, he came to Newton to assist in ordaining Mr. Nathan Ward, a kinsman of the present Wards of Newton, as pastor of the Separate church that existed here. This is the earliest sign of its existence, and the date of its organization is unknown.

This Separate church had not a very long history, nor a very placid one. Differences of opinion arose within it upon the subject of baptism. Mr. Ward was a Pedobaptist,

as were most of the members at first; but many of them became convinced that believers alone should be baptized, and received baptism on profession of their faith. These Baptists retained their connection with the church, however, of which they came in time to constitute a majority. Mr. Ward withdrew from his office about 1763, and sought a field of labor elsewhere. There are said to have been differences within the church also, about the support of the ministry and the improvement of gifts for edification. Some members died, and some removed; and the church, as an organized body, ceased to exist. In the quaint phrase of Isaac Backus, "Things were in a broken posture in Newton for many years." But the Baptist brethren, who remained from the Separate church, held worship on the Lord's day, first in dwellings and afterwards in a school-house. There were a few other Baptists residing in the town, who had been baptized, some in Boston, and some by the Rev. Mr. Green, of Leicester, who was both physician and preacher, and journeyed as an apostle. The earliest record of baptism of a resident of Newton was made at the First Baptist Church in Boston, Dec. 7, 1729; and, between this date and 1774, some fifteen or twenty names appear in the records of the town and in other records as the names of Baptists. It is probable that these names are far from representing the whole number. These brethren maintained worship, and were occasionally visited by ministers, whose services were joyfully received; and this continued till 1780.

Now, a strange figure appears upon the scene,—an interesting and brilliant man, whose work for good and for evil can be estimated only by the Omniscient One. Elhanan Winchester, Jr., descended from an old Newton family, was born on the border of Brookline in 1751. He was

converted at eighteen, began to preach at nineteen, and was ordained before he was twenty. He was naturally gifted with a remarkable eloquence, and his preaching was attended with great results wherever he went. Between 1771 and 1779, he labored in various parts of Massachusetts as a preacher in the Separate churches; he went to South Carolina, where he served a Baptist Church; he preached in Virginia and other Southern States, making leisurely journeys that he might preach as he went; and he supplied for a short time the pulpit of the First Baptist Church in Boston. Late in 1779 he returned to New England, and in the spring of 1780 he visited Newton. His father had been a deacon in the Separate church of Brookline, but was now interested in the company of Baptists in Newton, already mentioned. Here the young man preached with his accustomed power. A religious interest had sprung up before his coming, and by his labors it was increased and extended. Many were converted under his influence, and that of other ministers who joined in the work, and received baptism at his hands. It was a greater ingathering than the little band had ever received before, and it gave them such strength as they had not possessed. Naturally came the thought of a new and better organization; and the result was the formation of the church that is now reviewing a century of life. There had been a half-century of preparation, for just fifty years had elapsed since the first resident of Newton was received into a Baptist church.

Four preliminary meetings were held in the month of June, at which the brethren "voted the following articles to be necessary to regulate our walk in Church State, agreeable to the word of God." Only at the fourth meeting was the list of twenty-one articles completed. The articles contained no doctrinal statements, but are given wholly to prac-

tical affairs. It must be confessed that they do not make a document of the first importance; but they deal with the practical difficulties that the brethren had met with in the earlier organization, and were carefully framed with reference to the exigencies of the times. At the third meeting, it was voted "to send to other churches for assistance and advice," the other churches being those of Middleborough, Bellingham, and Medfield. On Wednesday, July 5, 1780, the council met. The place was the house of Mr. Noah Wiswall, now occupied by Mr. Luther Paul. There were present three ministers: Rev. Noah Alden, of Bellingham; Rev. Thomas Gair, of Medfield; and Rev. Caleb Blood, concerning whom more will soon be said. Rev. Isaac Backus had been invited, but did not come. The visiting brethren approved the steps that had been taken, and advised the brethren in Newton "to imbody on this occasion." Thereupon, Mr. Alden preached from the text in Acts ii., 47, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Then Mr. Gair prayed, and "read over a summary confession of faith," which seems to have been the confession of the Second Baptist Church in Boston, afterward called the Baldwin Place Church and still later the Warren Avenue. To this confession, "thirty-nine persons assented, in the presence of a numerous congregation; and the whole was concluded by an exhortation from Mr. Blood." Thus the work was ended; and by this simple ceremony was founded a church that has stood a century, and may stand for centuries more.

The fraternity into which the new church came was not a very large one. It is difficult to tell just how many Baptist churches then existed in Massachusetts. According to Isaac Backus' list, made about 1795, the number appears to have been between forty and fifty. The churches now

existing in Massachusetts that were formed before 1780 are twenty-three in number. The nearest neighbors were the two churches in Boston (which, however, for some reason were not invited to assist in the recognition), and the churches in Medfield (formed in 1776), Wrentham, and Bellingham. Haverhill and Chelmsford were the nearest on the north, and Sutton, Leicester, and Charlton on the west. There was no Baptist church in any town of Massachusetts that is now a city, with the exceptions of Boston, Haverhill, Taunton, and New Bedford; and the churches of Taunton and New Bedford appear to have become extinct, to be followed by churches that now exist. Ten new churches were organized in 1780, but only three of them have survived the century.

The days just then were of the darkest. The war for independence was approaching its end, it is true; but the events that were to bring the end and the victory were yet to be developed. Thus far, the patriots had to walk by faith; for sight was but a poor helper to their courage. The seat of the war was no longer in this vicinity, and the excitements of Lexington, Bunker Hill, and the siege of Boston were past; but the tidings that came from the South were far from hopeful. The treason of Arnold was then in progress, and was discovered a few weeks after the founding of the church,—a treason that was suggested by the apparent hopelessness of the American cause. It seemed, indeed, as if the long struggle was but too likely to end in the defeat of liberty. Although the actual scenes of war were distant, the whole country was suffering from poverty and loss. We have complained, at the end of the century, of hard times and the evils of a depreciated currency. But it is written that in March, 1780, the town of Newton voted a tax of £30,000 to defray the expenses of the war; in

September following, £40,000 more; and, in December, £100,000 more,— £170,000 within a year. But in May, 1781, it was voted "that £400, silver money, be raised, in lieu of the £100,000 tax in bills." The cash value of a hundred thousand was rated at four hundred. In the same strain, it is recorded in the church-book that in September, 1780, it was "voted to give Brother Noah Wiswall forty pounds (quarterly) as a present, for the use of his house to meet in." Rather high rent, we would say,— £160 a year; but, if the rate of value in the church was the same as in the town, the whole yearly income of Mr. Wiswall from the church was worth between three and four dollars.

Dark as the political skies were, however, there was in Massachusetts the light of righteousness to cheer the hearts of those who believed that righteousness must prevail. Just after the church was founded, the new Constitution went into effect. Adopted by the people in the spring, it became the law of the land on the twenty-fifth day of October, 1780; and by this instrument slavery was once and forever abolished. "The manner in which Massachusetts left slavery behind, as of the dead and irrevocable past, was the noblest," says Bancroft, "that could have been devised. The inborn, inalienable right of man to freedom was written in the permanent Constitution, as the law of all coming legislation." It may seem an accident, and one of small importance; and yet it is pleasant to find the fathers of our church among the men to whom this wise and noble act was possible.

Thirty-nine persons are said to have assented to the confession that was read by Mr. Gair. Only thirty-eight appear as constituent members, received on the 5th of July; but the larger number probably includes the Rev. Caleb Blood, who was the moderator of the meetings preliminary to organization, though not received to the church until the follow-

ing year. He was then in the twenty-sixth year of his age, and had already been two or three years pastor and evangelist in Marlow, N.H. He seems to have been living at this time in the town of Weston, where there were Baptists not yet organized. He was at once called to the pastorate of the new church. He does not seem to have accepted the call at once, though he was constantly acting as a guide to the young body. In the spring of 1781, he removed to Newton, and fully assumed the pastoral office, which he held nearly seven years. On Saturday, the 15th of July, seventeen members were added to the original thirty-eight, and on Sunday, the 16th, seven more. Before the year ended, the number on the list was seventy-three. The church voted to have a weekly collection, and to observe the Lord's Supper once in six weeks. It immediately joined itself to the Warren Association, sending delegates and a letter to the meeting of that body at Athol, in September.

The first place of worship, as we have seen, was Mr. Wiswall's house. On fair Sundays, the meetings were often held under the elms that overshadowed the dwelling. Mr. Wiswall gave the church the land for a house of worship, and in 1781 the work of building was undertaken. "Wiswall's Pond" was not named from this Noah Wiswall, but from his great-grandfather Thomas, who was a constituent member of the First Church of Newton in 1664, and was then appointed its ruling elder and assistant pastor. The pond became "Baptist Pond" by this gift of land upon its shore for Baptist purposes, and by being used for a century, and perhaps actually longer, as a baptistery. The house that was begun in 1781 was probably used from that year or the next, but it was not finished till 1795. The church was content to use rough seats and a pulpit of unplaned boards, rather than to assume the burden of a debt. The house was in

the style of that period, of course, and was a plain structure, bare and barn-like, when all was finished. It was enlarged in 1802, and was in use until 1836, when it was abandoned for the house in which we are now assembled. We may see the original structure, with the addition removed, any day, for it still stands on the original site; but we cannot well imagine the groups that entered it in those early days, or revive for our minds the sanctity that lived within the house for theirs.

Of the first pastorate there is a considerably full record; and it is not the record of a pleasant history. The first clerk of the church was the first to come under discipline and be excluded; and the discipline began when the church was six months old. The second clerk was the next to follow in the same way, less than a year later. All through these years, discipline abounded; and it always resulted in exclusion. There was no case of restoration through church "labor" for eleven years. An unexpected reason for discipline had arisen. The Rev. Elhanan Winchester, after baptizing the most of the original members of the church, had returned in the autumn of 1780 to Philadelphia, where he was engaged for a time as supply for the pulpit of the First Baptist Church. There it is said that he heard John Murray, the Apostle of Universalism, and the founder of the first church of that faith in America. There, Winchester avowed himself a supporter of the doctrine of Universal Restoration, and preached it with all his accustomed power. His preaching rent in twain the church to which he was ministering. He and his party, being apparently the majority, sued at law for the possession of the house of worship, but were defeated. Whereupon, he formed a Universalist church in Philadelphia, and became its pastor. Afterward, he travelled widely, both in America and in England, preaching the doctrine

of Universal Salvation. He had been "given to change" before, having held first to open and then to close communion, and having been first an Arminian in doctrine and then a hyper-Calvinist; but in the views that he had now reached he continued steadfast, until his death in 1797. It is said that his personal character was never impeached, and his piety never doubted. He died in Hartford, where his funeral sermon was preached by a Congregational minister who was a strong opponent of his doctrine, but who cheerfully bore testimony to his personal excellence.

The departure of such a man from the faith of the church that he had founded was an event of much importance to that church. Very naturally, his family sympathized with his views. There were nine Winchesters among the first fifty members of this church, the name of Elhanan Winchester, senior, holding the place of honor as the first upon the list. Of these nine, seven were excluded from the church, the most of them for holding the views which their brilliant kinsman had avowed. The doctrine is often called in the record "the doctrine of the restoration of all wicked men and devils from hell." Others besides this family were subjected to discipline for the same reason. There was also an amount of immorality in the church that puts us to the blush. Ten of the original thirty-eight were excluded within the first pastorate; and, out of ninety-two who were members in Mr. Blood's time, at least fifteen, or about one-sixth, were excluded before he left the church.

These matters occupy almost the whole of the record for several years. The details of "labor" are often introduced; and there are recorded letters of admonition to various offenders, and letters solemnly conveying the announcement of exclusion. Mr. Blood was by no means a feeble leader; and his letters, though they often seem somewhat harsh in tone,

are weighty and powerful. The first doctrinal statement that the book contains was recorded May 29, 1782: "The meeting, being opened by prayer, proceeded to business, as follows: 1. To make inquiry how the minds of the church stood as to the belief of the doctrine of redemption of the wicked from hell, and found that Brother Elhanan Winchester (senior) and his wife, and Sister Rebecca Hammond, were in the belief of the above-mentioned doctrine; 2. Voted, that the church cannot hold fellowship with any persons holding the doctrine of redemption of the wicked from hell, it being a doctrine contrary to God's Word." The case of these members lingered, however, for nearly two years, probably because of their prominence, and the desire of the church for their restoration. In August, 1783, the church, "viewing Brother Elhanan Winchester and his wife, and Sister Rebecca Hammond, to be captivated with false doctrine, thought it expedient to appoint a day of fasting and prayer on their account, and on the low state of religion among us." But the firm stand of the church was effective, and this form of doctrine disappeared after about ten years.

All through Mr. Blood's pastorate, too, there were financial embarrassments. The meeting-house was still in process of completion, and no less than five subscriptions were raised for the work at different times. It was no easy matter for the brethren to agree as to the best way to provide for the support of the pastor. There was great sensitiveness as to how much each one ought to give. They knew no better plan, apparently, than that of "equality" or "average"; but that plan did not repress the jealousies and complaints. There were always arrearages to be made up. There was great difficulty, too, in finding a suitable place for Mr. Blood and his family to live; and there was still greater difficulty in enabling him to pay his rent. In June, 1781, it was voted in

the society "that the committee for supporting Mr. Blood ascertain and inform this society what each man's proportionable part may be toward supporting Mr. Blood, that they may know how to give according as God has prospered them." In 1783, a committee communicated to Mr. Blood the desire of the society that he should continue with them, and asked him how long a time he would engage for. He replied, so long as they should continue to treat him as a gospel minister ought to be treated, and no longer. They then informed him that the society had subscribed fifty-eight pounds a year so long as they should view it their duty to sit under his ministry, which he thought a generous sum in the circumstances, but insufficient, as he had no house. Whereupon, they raised the amount to sixty pounds. In November, 1787, "the question being tried [in the society] whether Mr. Blood could possibly discharge his debts and support his family with what he received from the society," —a very proper question to be considered,—"it passed in the negative." So he was released, with perfect good-will, from his pastoral engagement; and his services terminated on the 24th of January, 1788. It was not till February 8, 1792, however, that he signed a receipt in full for what the society owed him.

He removed to Shaftsbury, Vermont, where he remained nearly twenty years. He then returned to Boston, as the first pastor of the Charles Street Church. After some two years of service there, he became pastor of the First Baptist Church in Portland, Me., where he died in 1814, leaving an honorable record as a minister of Christ.

Now enters to the record, in 1788, the name that has been more closely identified than any other with that of the church, the name of Joseph Grafton. He was born at Newport, R.I., in 1757, and spent his youth and early manhood

in Providence. He was converted in his eighteenth year, and united with the church of his parents, the Congregational Church. He soon thought of entering the ministry, but circumstances did not favor the step; and he married, and settled in life. It was not till his wife and his two sons had been taken away from him, and he himself had been brought close to the grave by illness, that he yielded to his convictions of duty, and gave himself to the work of preaching the gospel. For two or three years, perhaps, he preached as a Congregationalist, without being ordained. He then embraced the principles of the Baptists, and united with the First Church in Providence. After some months spent in Connecticut, he visited Newton, where it was appointed that his life should be spent. He came almost immediately after Mr. Blood's withdrawal. His name first appears in the records of the society on the 10th of March, when he had been at least two Sundays here. A call was decided upon on the 10th of April, and voted on the 6th of May. His salary was to be fifty-five pounds; but it was afterwards increased to sixty, and "eight cords of wood delivered at his door" was added. In addition to this, there was a collection weekly on the floor of the meeting-house, and monthly in the gallery, the proceeds of which were called the "loose money." This had been given to Mr. Blood, and for many years was paid to Mr. Grafton regularly on Mondays.

The call was promptly accepted, and Mr. Grafton was ordained on the 18th of June, 1788. The Rev. Isaac Backus presided at the council, and the Rev. John Stanford of Providence preached. Thus was begun a pastorate of forty-eight years and six months. He who was thus received as pastor, at the age of thirty-one, peacefully died among his own people in his eightieth year.

The records of this long pastorate are, on the whole, extremely meagre. The pastor very soon became the clerk, and kept all the record that was kept, until 1835, a year and a half before his death. The record of forty-seven years occupies about fifty-six pages of the book. Half of this space is given to the first three years. Twelve pages were given, in 1790, to the case of a couple who had imbibed certain ideas about perfection, and the necessity of miraculous gifts to the constitution of the church, "with divers other enthusiastical notions," Father Grafton wrote to them, "which never existed only in the fertile soil of a warm imagination." Twelve pages were given to this; and then for ten years, 1799 to 1809, there were only two entries, made in 1803; and a break of a year or two in the later records is nothing unusual. The list of additions to the church was kept along, and there is no proof that it is not complete; though it is easy to see that omissions may have occurred in such a record. There is a fair record of the proceedings of the society during all these years, and indeed throughout the century.

There still remain about ten members in the church who became connected with it in Father Grafton's time, and there are a few others who remember him. To those upon whose memory his features and his character are engraved, no words from such lips as mine can do him justice. In fact and in spirit, he was the father of his people. On his last birthday, he wrote, "That generation who were still members of the church when I was settled among them are all gone the way of all the earth, except two." His church had grown up about him, and the members of it looked upon him with love and reverence. More than twelve years after his death, Dr. Smith wrote: "Since I came to the pastorate, but very few days have at any time passed in which I have

not heard some allusion to the Rev. Joseph Grafton, my honored and revered predecessor. It has happened to few ministers to live so vividly in the hearts of their people, so long after the veil that hides eternity from time has dropped between them." This testimony well represents the hold that he had upon the church. A sincere and earnest man, of true piety and warm sympathies, of mild but ready wit, of strong social impulses and quick discernment of human nature, he gave himself honestly to the work of winning and instructing souls, and was able in a rare degree to impress his own spirit upon the people around him. On that same birthday, the last, he wrote: "I have the vanity or pleasure to believe that no pastor was ever happier with a church than I have been, for which I bless God." And his view of the life-long pastorate was heartily shared by his people.

If we could see him as he looked in his later years, we should see a little man, bright and active, with wonderfully keen black eyes. He wore a brown wig; and to the end of his days, though the style had changed, he wore the old-fashioned short breeches and knee-buckles. He was a great visitor among his people, and could be seen any day in his chaise somewhere upon the road. His chaise was his study more than any room of his house. He had the same difficulty as Mr. Blood in finding a place to live; and some members of the society bought and presented to him the triangle of land that is bounded by Centre, Homer, and Grafton Streets. The house stood a little north of the Rand house, and was removed only a few years ago; but since its removal it has been destroyed by fire.

For a time after his coming, the additions to the church were but moderate in number. There were more than thirty in the two years, 1788 and 1789; but there were only forty-three in the eighteen years that followed, down to the end of

1807. These were prosperous years for the Baptist churches in Boston; but, for some reason, they were years of sowing rather than of reaping here. The two following years were more fruitful; and in 1810 there began a religious interest that continued through 1811, and perhaps longer still. Fifty-one were added to the church in 1811, and twenty-eight in 1812. This reviving brought great joy to the faithful pastor, who published an account of it in the *Baptist Missionary Magazine.* It was a quiet work, he says, "free from noise and confusion, excepting what has been made by its enemies." The preaching of the Word was the principal means of the great change in the people. A few incidents have been preserved: "On a Sabbath afternoon, when the minister was preaching from this passage, 'A bruised reed he will not break, and the smoking flax he will not quench,' two young men at meeting, one sitting in the gallery, and the other in a pew below, were both at the same moment, and from the same idea of truth, brought to hope in the compassion of the Saviour. In the evening, at a meeting, each related his exercises; and their hearts ran together like the hearts of David and Jonathan." Twenty of the persons baptized were heads of families, and seventeen were under twenty-one years of age. "Were it not that the good and great Shepherd carries the lambs in his arms," says the thoughtful pastor, "I should greatly fear for them. But Christ says, 'My lambs,—my sheep,—I give unto them eternal life.' May we not trust them with him?" Even unto this day, one of this company of converts, but not one of the youngest, remains in the church. Seth Davis was already twenty-three years of age when, with his wife, he was baptized by Father Grafton on the 6th of October, 1811; and for more than sixty-nine years he has been a member of this church. No wonder that he loves it, and thinks there

is no other like it; and no wonder that we are thankful to see him in his place to-day. He and the church are mutually indebted to each other for long good service.

After this happy refreshing, additions to the church continued frequent, the total number in fourteen years being one hundred and twenty-eight. But in 1827 there came a greater revival than had been known before. Within this year, one hundred and three persons were added to the church. Somewhat more than forty followed in the next four years; and in 1832 there came another great season of blessing, in which ninety-one persons were received to membership. The details of these two great revivals it is not easy to gather. It is well remembered that they were seasons of deep and intense religious feeling; and men of mature minds and honorable standing yielded to the powerful influence, as well as the young. In the later of the two, at least, great help was rendered by the professors and students of the Theological Institution, which had now come to be an element in the life of the church. The aged hands of the pastor were relieved of the labor of baptizing by Professor Chase and Professor Ripley; and it is said that, on one occasion, the almost inspired singing of an impressive hymn by one of the students led to the conversion of several persons. It is worthy of notice that these two great revivals occurred in the old age of the pastor. His seventieth birthday fell in the midst of the time when converts were coming into the church in 1827, and his seventy-fifth in the midst of the period of additions in 1832. It was not a youthful voice that called these souls to Christ, and rejoiced over their coming. This was the crowning of a half-century's faithful toil, which resulted in the gathering in to the church of no less than five hundred and sixty-one persons. Mr. Grafton's long pastorate was arranged indeed almost accord-

ing to an ideal plan. First, a good accession when he came; then, a period of spiritual sowing, which may have seemed almost too long, but which was followed in the midst of the pastorate by a quiet and rich revival; then, accessions coming faster than before, the same honored voice being still heard in counsel and instruction; then, new influences and helps coming to the aged pastor's aid, and his life-long toil crowned first by one and then by another great ingathering of souls; then, the faithful servant willingly resigning the work to other hands, and peacefully falling asleep in Jesus. What could be more beautiful? And how can we wonder that he thought himself as happy with his church as any pastor had ever been?

We should greatly mistake if we imagined the church in anything like its present field or condition, and supposed that all these people lived in a little circle about the house of worship. Much later than 1832, this part of Newton was wholly devoted to farming; and at that time, between the old church by the pond and the old burying-ground opposite the Colby house, there were not more, probably, than eight houses. The congregation had to come from far, for there was little material for a congregation near. And they did come from far. The roll of the church often contains the mention of the residence of members; and the neighboring towns thus represented in the church are Brookline, Roxbury, Watertown, Waltham, West Cambridge, Dedham, and Needham. Cambridge and Brighton might also have been mentioned. Remoter places in which members had their residence are Canton, Groton, Stow, Worcester, and New London, N.H.; but the members from these places were undoubtedly transient residents in or near Newton. According to the pastor, in his half-century sermon, there was a time when there were habitual attendants upon worship

here from eleven neighboring towns, including Newton. In some of these towns, in the earlier days of the church, dissenters from the Congregational order were still taxed for the support of the established church. No such thing had been done in Newton since 1776, the year of liberty. But the society very early voted to give its aid in protecting the rights of its members in other towns, advising them to pay their taxes under protest, if their towns would not recognize them as entitled to exemption ; and then advising the minister, who was at that time Mr. Blood, to sue the towns for the recovery of such taxes. Father Grafton was accustomed to preach, on week days or Sunday evenings, in Watertown, Cambridge, Brookline, and other places ; but this practice of his did not prevent the people from walking on Sunday mornings up to their Christian home on the shore of the Baptist pond. They were a sturdier race than we ; and their life was so much less crowded with excitements than ours that the worship on the Lord's day occupied a much larger space, relatively, than it does with us. So did the themes and thoughts that were suited to the day. As they walked in friendly groups from Watertown or Brookline, they talked more seriously of serious things than we do ; and they could spend more time than we find it easy to spend in the discussion of Christian doctrines and practices. So they came soberly to the house of worship, expecting to obtain, in listening to the Word, enough to pay them fully for their walk. In winter, the house of worship was so cold that they were glad to escape from it after service to their noon-houses, where three or four families would gather about a single fire to eat their lunch. But after 1795 there was a stove in the house, put in with careful directions from the society as to where it should stand, and where the funnel should go out. After that, the people would stay in the meeting-house

between the services; and it was the habit of their pastor to remain among them, going from group to group, and meeting them as a father meets his children. They shared their dinner with him, and he talked with them faithfully concerning their spiritual welfare. After the second service, they wended their way homeward, often talking of what they had heard, and often profoundly impressed by the good pastor's fervent prayers and faithful counsels. They had their faults, which were not exactly the same as ours; and they had their great and noble virtues, which were not exactly like those of their successors. Sometimes, it is half-suspected that the earnest and persistent fear of God has well-nigh fled from the earth with the departure of our pious fathers. But, good as they were, I suspect that any one who carefully reads the record of this church for a hundred years will not wish that he could change places with any generation that has gone before us.

It could not be otherwise than that such a mother church as this should become a mother of churches. The field was too great for her long to occupy alone, and her success in gaining distant members was only a step toward their separation from her. Already, in 1787, the Baptist brethren in Framingham had requested to have the Lord's Supper administered to them as a branch of this church, and their request had been granted; and in 1789 help was given in organizing the church in Weston, with the members of which this church had already communicated respecting the services of Mr. Blood. In the later days, the first company to go out was the Baptist church in Cambridge, located at Cambridgeport, which was formed in 1817. Into this body went some of the best members of the old church; and Father Grafton wrote in the record, "Never did a church dismiss such a number of members with fairer character and with

greater union and affection." The church in West Cambridge, now Arlington, was formed in the same year, and took some members from Newton. In 1821, the church in Roxbury, now known as the Dudley Street Church of Boston, was organized, and to this again the mother sent some of her best children. The new city of Lowell, in which a Baptist church was formed in 1826, drew its population from all quarters; and this church dismissed a considerable company who had gone thither — the number is variously stated — to join the new body. The church in Brookline, formed in 1828, took some members directly from this, and embraced more who had already gone from this to the churches in Cambridge and Roxbury. In 1830, a large and honorable company withdrew to build a home of their own in Watertown, where the church that was then organized has just completed its fiftieth year. All these churches have lived and prospered, and their fame is so wide-spread that we have no need to speak the praises of those who have gone out from among us. The last and largest colony was sent out in 1835, when fifty-two members were dismissed to form the Second Baptist Church of Newton, at the Upper Falls. That village was perhaps more prosperous in manufacturing then than it has been since; and a Baptist house of worship had been built and dedicated some two years before the organization of the church. Public worship had for some time been held there; and the formation of the church amounted merely to a territorial division of the older body, as there were only five constituent members in the new, besides the fifty-two who went out from us. Thus, in less than twenty years, seven new churches derived some part, and four or five of them the chief part, of their constituent members from this mother church. Perhaps this ought to be added, as the completion of the ideal life-long pastorate

of Father Grafton. He had the blessedness of gathering, and the blessedness of scattering abroad; and, before he died, he saw his work organized in a wider field, to exert influence which could never have gone forth from a single centre. There are now as many as twenty churches within the field of which he was once the sole Baptist pastor.

In July, 1835, the good old pastor requested, in view of the increasing infirmities of age, to be released from active service. The church lovingly granted his request, and began to seek for a junior pastor. After ineffective negotiations with Joseph W. Eaton, who had just finished his studies here, a call was given to the Rev. Frederic Augustus Willard, a native of Lancaster, Mass., and a graduate of Amherst College and Newton Theological Institution, who was then at Worcester. The church, for some reason, called a council to install him, which council was regularly organized, and proceeded exactly as in an ordination, hearing the candidate's "Christian experience, call to the ministry, and views of Christian doctrine and gospel ordinances,"— a very unusual proceeding among Baptists. This occurred November 25, 1835; and Mr. Willard served the church from that time till July 29, 1838. Father Grafton preached occasionally after his retirement. The date of his last sermon at home is not recorded; but he preached in Roxbury on Sunday evening, December 11, 1836, the last Sunday of his life, from the text, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" On Wednesday following, he fell sick in his own home; and on Friday, December 16, he peacefully breathed his last. It had been expected that he would preach on the 18th, at the last service that the church was to hold in the old house of worship by the pond, which it was just leaving for this house, then about to be dedicated. He preached on that day to the people who gathered there, most

touchingly, but only in the spirit of the text, "He being dead yet speaketh." On Tuesday, the 20th, his remains were borne to the familiar place. The old house was crowded as it never had been before, while Dr. Sharp told of the virtues of his long-loved friend and brother. The funeral hymn was sung, and the great congregation followed the faithful pastor out from those walls to his burial, and no religious service was afterwards held within them. The pastor's remains were laid in the Harback tomb; and the society afterwards procured a lot in the old centre burying-ground, which is the last earthly resting-place of Father Grafton and his family.

The scattering abroad of the gathered treasures had been very liberal; and after the last colony had gone out, in 1835, it began to appear as if the old church had been too generous. On occasion of one of the separations, Father Grafton said: "When the bees swarm, they always leave honey enough in the hive for those that remain to live on." But in this case they almost failed to provide for the old home. By the formation of churches in other towns, the field of the church was shut in to the limits of Newton; and just at the same time, unwisely perhaps, that narrow field was divided by the formation of the church at the Upper Falls. The result was a great diminution both of numbers and of financial strength. "The resident members and the property of the church have thus been so far weakened," Mr. Willard wrote in September, 1836, "that one year ago *some* of its members seriously proposed disbanding."

When Mr. Willard was settled, his salary was to be $600 a year, toward which the Massachusetts Baptist Convention voted an appropriation of whatever the church might need, not exceeding $200. For some years following, matters grew worse rather than better. The financial troubles of 1837 occasioned considerable changes in the population of

the town, in the course of which many members of the church were lost by removal. Many who remained had suffered severe losses. At the same time, the church was abandoning its old place of worship, and removing to a new locality; and, in taking this step, it lost the co-operation of several persons of some wealth who would have helped to build on the old spot. The change of location was decided upon calmly, as a matter of judgment. "The location which we take," Mr. Willard wrote, "is less congenial to the feelings of nine-tenths of those who have cheerfully assented to the removal." The step was taken expressly in order to accommodate the Theological Institution, which had now been ten or twelve years in existence. The land for the new house was given to the society by Mrs. Anna White. In order to adapt the house to the public uses of the Institution, they made it about one-seventh larger than any other house of worship in the town, and one-fourth larger than their ordinary purposes required. Some help was received from members of neighboring churches; but many promises of such assistance failed to be fulfilled because of the hard times. And, with all that they could obtain, the burden was a heavy one, though the house that they built was not, like the temple, "exceeding magnifical." It was a plain structure, not overcharged with beauty; and when it was dedicated, on the 22d of December, 1836, not without debt, the church rejoiced, but rejoiced with trembling, amid the changes and uncertainties that were upon them. After that event, the pecuniary embarrassment did not diminish; and the pastor intimated more than once, in communications to the church, that there was a sad lack of unanimity of feeling among the people. The current expenses were not met, and there was a considerable arrearage due to the pastor. In June, 1838, Mr. Willard made

a proposal to help the society in meeting both its expenses and the interest on its debt, on condition that the arrearage was paid. But the society voted, "with unfeigned regret," that "in their present pecuniary embarrassments they feel themselves unable to pay him the amount of salary that was voted to him." Whereupon, he resigned; and his place was vacated on the 29th of July. He afterwards served as pastor in Louisville, Ky., and in South Danvers, South Abington, and Needham, Mass., and died at Philadelphia in 1866. Under his ministry, seventeen persons were added to the church.

The next pastor did not come till the beginning of 1842, after three years and five months had passed. The church did not feel itself able to support a pastor, and did not seek one. But on November 1, 1838, it was voted to request Professor Ripley to supply the pulpit, and exercise such a care over the church as his other duties would allow; and on the 30th of November he accepted the position of acting pastor. He conscientiously regarded an acting pastor as a man who acts, in the pastor's place; and he did as much work, apparently, as could be expected of a pastor whose services were not gratuitous. This arrangement continued for nearly two years, or until September 4, 1840. During this time, a long-continued effort to obtain a satisfactory list of the members of the church was completed; and a list was accepted in the spring of 1840, that contained the names of twenty-three men and seventy-nine women, or one hundred and two in all. In 1835, after the departure of the Upper Falls church, the number reported was two hundred and twenty-four. But the body, though small, was of better courage than at some other times; and conversions began to occur, more numerous than at any time since the great ingathering of 1832. Thirty-nine persons were added to

the church during this interval between the pastorates. After September, 1840, the church began again to look for a pastor. In March, 1841, Mr. Silas B. Randall, a recent graduate of the Institution, received a unanimous call from church and society; but he also received a call to Woburn, which he thought it his duty to accept. There was some desire to reinstate Professor Ripley in the place that he had vacated, but he was not willing to stand in the way of the obtaining of a permanent pastor. At length, it became known that the Rev. Samuel Francis Smith, then of Waterville, Maine, was about to remove to Boston to act as editor of the *Christian Review*, and was willing to be also the pastor of some church in this vicinity. He spent one Sunday here, and intended to visit the church again, but found it impossible. Thereupon, on November 14, 1841, the church unanimously voted to call him to the pastorate for one year. "It was thought desirable to state a limited time," says the record, "as the society in a particular manner might have serious objections to making provision for the permanent support of a person with whom they are not acquainted." The society having concurred in the call, Mr. Smith began his labors at the beginning of 1842. At the end of a year, the call was unanimously renewed, without limitation of time. The pastorate thus begun continued until the end of June, 1854, twelve years and six months.

The general character of the life of this period is well described by a passage in a letter of the church to the Association a little later, in 1857. "The annual record of any church located as ours is can contain little of general interest, unless specially blessed with divine influences. We dwell among ourselves, seldom experiencing the stir and bustle incident to other neighborhoods. The regularity of our religious life borders upon sameness, and the manifesta-

tion of religious feeling indicates but little change." The community was still small, and its daily life was almost unaffected as yet by the proximity of a great city. The pastorate of Dr. Smith was quiet, uneventful, and prosperous. The church seems to have been drawn closer together in brotherly feeling. The number of persons added to the church was one hundred and six, the largest additions occurring in 1842, 1848, and 1851. The benevolent operations of the church were better organized than before, and the gifts were consequently larger. The new hymn-book, the *Psalmist*, of which the pastor was the principal compiler, was adopted for use in public worship. "Winchell's Watts" had been in use before, apparently since 1821. Pecuniary embarrassments still continued, and the proposed increase of the pastor's salary after the first year could not be made; but in 1846 the church was able to relieve the society of nearly $2,000 of its debt, which was nearly the whole, by turning to this purpose, by the consent of heirs, a legacy given some years before by Mrs. Nancy Foster. A case of discipline, arising out of pecuniary difficulties between two brethren, occupies some space in the record. In 1851, some repairs were made on the house of worship. Thus the years passed quietly, bringing gradual improvement, but showing no great changes. Just at the end of Dr. Smith's pastorate, several members were dismissed to form a church at Newtonville, which was afterward merged in the church that was formed at West Newton. Dr. Smith resigned his charge in April, 1854, and closed his labors on the 30th of June. "Our pastor leaves us," says the record, "with our unabated confidence in his integrity and excellence as a Christian and a minister of Christ, with entire affection on our part toward him, and with our prayers for his future usefulness and happiness."

But he did not withdraw from among his people, and he would be with us to-day, were it not that one of the rarest of privileges has been given him,—the privilege of visiting at once a beloved son and the mission-field in which his heart has so long been at home.

In September following, a call to the vacant pulpit was extended to Rev. Oakman S. Stearns, then of Newark, N.J.; but it was declined. The call was renewed, however, in August, 1855, and was now accepted; and on the 23d of September a pastorate of twelve years and eight months was begun. The services of Dr. Stearns ended May 31, 1868. His successor, Rev. William N. Clarke, then of Keene, N.H., was called March 24, 1869, and began his labors here on the 16th of May. His pastorate lasted eleven years lacking two weeks, and closed May 1, 1880. For the purposes of the present review, the events of the last two pastorates may just as well be grouped together.

Dr. Stearns found the church worshipping by invitation with the Congregational church, while this house of worship was almost made new. Great changes were made within. The tower was erected; and a bell, for the first time, began to call the worshippers. The hospitality of our Congregational neighbors was enjoyed for eight months at that time, a kindness which they showed us again for a few weeks last year. The two churches have always had many pleasant connections. The old pastors, Dr. Homer and Father Grafton, were near neighbors and close friends, and their graves are side by side in the old cemetery; and the more recent pastors have been true brethren to each other in love. The house of worship was reopened early in 1856, with Dr. Stearns, the new pastor, in the pulpit. Its subsequent fortunes need only be alluded to: how the chapel was added

in 1860; how the house was remodelled again in 1869, receiving then a baptistery, and a new organ in place of one which had served since 1840; how the pews have suffered contraction and expansion according to the exigencies of the time; how the old structure was retouched with paint last year, and then was damaged a few weeks later by the gale, which barely spared it; and how it stands in hope of giving place to something better. It has never been famous for beauty, but it has been a pleasant and sacred home for a good religious life.

In 1858, this passage was inserted in the letter to the Association, a passage in which one of the chief facts about the church is well set forth: "In former years, one of our chief sources of anxiety has arisen from the apparent inability to blend together the variety of elements of which, though a small body, we are composed. We were not troubled with discords, but neither were we cheered with the harmony of many sounds. There was a very marked feeling of irresponsibility on the part of some, generated in part by the fear of man, which induced a disposition to leave to others what their own spiritual growth required to be done by themselves. This feeling was particularly manifest in our prayer-meetings, which, though interesting and profitable, failed to call into exercise the various gifts with which we had been endowed." A change for the better had appeared within the year of which this letter makes mention; but all who know the church are aware that, as this fault was not then of recent origin, so it was not then eradicated. Such a fault was almost unavoidable in a church that contained such elements as were gathered here. Yet this was written while the great change in the constitution of the body had but just begun. From a little after the time of Dr. Stearns' coming, Boston began to give new character to

Newton by sending hither a new class of residents. The change began when Mr. Colby came in 1847, but from about 1858 it became much more rapid and extensive. Men of trade began to come in among the quiet citizens of the place ; and to the two elements that had existed before, the Theological Institution furnishing one, a third was added. How complete the change in character has been, there are but few that know ; for there are only twenty-eight members now in the church, resident or non-resident, whose connection with it dates back of Dr. Stearns' coming. The old difficulty about bearing the spiritual burdens equally continued after the change, as might have been expected, and continues still. And yet no one of the elements in the church has ever been wished away, except perhaps in some moment of ungodly impatience ; for each has been, in its own way, a rich blessing to the body.

During Dr. Stearns' pastorate, the growth of the church was steady and healthful. Two hundred and two persons were added to the church, one hundred and eleven of them by baptism ; and the additions were distributed quite evenly over the whole period. In his ministry, as in Dr. Smith's, a considerable number of young persons were received to membership. Two Sunday-schools were established, one at Oak Hill and one at Thompsonville. From the former, a considerable company of young converts came to the church. For the latter, a chapel was erected in 1867, and the school is still successfully maintained. The community was gradually growing larger, and the church was fully keeping pace with its progress. In benevolent operations, especially, there was a great increase, partly because the wealth of the church had received large additions, and partly for the much better reason that much of the wealth was in liberal hands. In 1865, the name of the body was changed, by vote, from

"The First Baptist Church of Newton" to "The Baptist Church at Newton Centre." Within these years came on the terrible experiences of the civil war. There seems to be no record of the number of men that the church contributed to the national army; but there is record of three who lost their lives,— Eben White, William N. Freeman, and Thomas C. Norcross,— and of others who did brave service on the field. The spirit of patriotism was never wanting here. In one of the annual letters to the Association, the church say, after an allusion to "our imperilled country," "We have hailed with joy the public occasions which have been appointed for supplication in her behalf, and in our daily prayers we have not forgotten her interests; for, besides the present demand of patriotism, we think that the best welfare of our nation for all coming time, and of mankind at large, is enfolded in the issue of our struggle."

Dr. Stearns withdrew from the pastoral office, to take the honorable place that he still holds in the Theological Institution. The eleven years of his successor's pastorate, from 1869 to 1880, were not marked by many events that call for record here. The chief event of the time was the revival of 1873, the most extensive that the church had enjoyed since Father Grafton's last spiritual harvest, in 1832. It brought into the church a large company of young people; and all who were permitted to have part in it remember well how beautiful and satisfactory was the work of grace, and how long the delightful spirit of holy life lingered among us. Very rarely is any church blessed with so happy a season of refreshing. Another addition to the church, nearly as large, was made in 1877, when all the churches in this vicinity were influenced by the work of Mr. Moody in Boston; but the memory of the earlier season of blessing can never be

effaced by any remembrances of the later and more general revival. Sixty-three persons were added to the church in 1873, thirty-six in 1874, and fifty-three in 1877. The whole number added in this pastorate was two hundred and fifty-eight, of whom one hundred and twenty-five were baptized. This brings the whole number who have been connected with the church within the hundred years to twelve hundred and ninety-five, an average of a little more than one addition a month throughout the century. For a church situated as this has been, this certainly seems to be a higher average than we could ordinarily expect. Few churches similarly placed have equalled it.

In 1876, when the church was preparing the second edition of its manual (the first having been printed in 1865), a new revision of the Articles of Faith was made. The church adopted no creed at its formation, unless the creed of the Second Church in Boston was regarded as tacitly adopted by being read. In 1813, a small sum was paid to Mr. Grafton "for the articles of our faith and covenant," probably a purchase of printed articles in Boston. The first sign of independent action is a pamphlet, printed in 1832, which contains a Confession of Faith that was in use by various churches in this vicinity. In 1856, a committee was appointed "with full powers to procure a new edition of the church articles, with appropriate Scripture references." This committee made some abridgment of the articles, and some other changes. In 1876, another committee added one article, and recast some of the others, and added to the proof texts, the whole being submitted to the members of the church, and by them somewhat altered before the final act of adoption. These few facts are all that the records of the church contain respecting the creed.

This mention of the creed and of the admission of mem-

bers brings to mind some facts in the record that illustrate the attitude and feeling of the church with reference to membership in itself. A committee of examination was appointed in 1817, enlarged and intrusted with additional duties in 1828, and made a matter of annual appointment in 1854. Tenderness and forbearance seem to have been the rule in dealing with applicants for baptism. As early as 1789, we find this sensible entry in the book: "Mr. Jonathan Hyde and Mrs. Clough related their experiences. The church voted they were satisfied with Mr. Hyde; and, part of the church not being [satisfied] with Mrs. Clough, they were desired to visit her, which they did, and gained full satisfaction." Something very similar occurred nearly sixty years later. Eight candidates were unanimously received, when "Professor Ripley expressed himself as not fully satisfied with the case of Thomas Norcross," the ninth. So "the professor and Deacon White were appointed a committee to confer with him more minutely, previous to the approbatory action of the church." On Sunday morning, after service and before the time for baptism, "Professor Ripley made a report in all respects highly satisfactory in respect to our young friend, Thomas C. Norcross"; and thereupon the church immediately received him, "without a single dissenting voice." In reference to the removal of members who had abandoned belief in the principles that are expressed in the creed, the decided course of the church in its early days has already been spoken of. In 1848, fellowship was withdrawn from a sister who had adopted the views of the Adventists, including the doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked. Fellowship was withdrawn from one absent member, who was reported to have become a Roman Catholic. The desire of a member to unite with another evangelical church, however, has always been treated with respect. The first record,

made in 1832, is typical in form and spirit of all: "Whereas Miss Harriet Bingham has represented to us that a connection with another denomination of Christians is more desirable to herself than a continued union with this church, voted, that in accordance with her request she be dismissed from her connection with this church." The total number of exclusions from the beginning seems to be about seventy, — thirty-eight, according to Father Grafton, in the first half-century, and about thirty-two in the second.

In this rapid review of a hundred years, the element of personal description, the portrayal of individual character and influence, has been almost entirely omitted. It would be unpardonable, however, to leave the story unilluminated by the light of individual life; for this personal element is essential to the right understanding of some important parts of the general history. Yet, as for the earlier part of the story, there is no one living who can supply the much-needed touches of description. Those days are too remote, and the actors of that time have passed too far from our knowledge. Some of the first members have descendants in the church to-day, indeed: the Wiswalls, the Halls, and the Kings are thus represented, and perhaps some others. But the church is composed, in so large a proportion, of newcomers in the town that even the names of the old Newton families sound but strangely to the greater part. A large number of well-known Newton names are on our roll, as well as some from neighboring towns; for here are Richardson, Dana, Hall, and Hastings; Cheney, Kenrick, Hyde, and Parker; Hammond, Richards, Stone, and Norcross; Coolidge, Hovey, Griggs, and Corey; Bacon, Brackett, Kingsbury, and Trowbridge; Bixby, Pettee, Cunningham, Keyes, and Scott; Langley, Lothrop, Bullough, and White. But we must leave the earliest fathers and mothers unde-

scribed. Some of them lingered among their children to extreme old age. From twenty-five to fifty years ago, there was a large proportion of aged men, and especially of aged women, in the church,—a state of things that is strongly in contrast with what we have lately seen, the church in recent years having been remarkably youthful. The longest term of membership in the church, longer than even that of Mr. Davis, ended on the 1st of January, 1859, when Mrs. Charlotte Wilson Harback died. She was baptized in July, 1788,—just after Father Grafton came,—and she died after seventy years and six months in fellowship with the church. The fathers have gone; and we cannot reproduce in imagination the quaint figures and serious faces that once thronged the old meeting-house. The few survivors of that earlier period will not wonder that an historical review fails to do justice to their memories of the past. It could not be otherwise, for the simple reason that one generation goeth and another cometh.

For the younger race, the period of conceptions that approach to definiteness begins as late as the founding of the Theological Institution, in 1825. Then came Professor Irah Chase to Newton, and met his two or three students at first in a little house that stood on Ward Street. He united with the church in 1826, and remained a member of it till 1857, though his residence was removed from Newton some years before that time. His coming was hailed with joy by the aged pastor and by the people, and he immediately became prominent in the work and counsels of the church. His influence was strong and good; but the extreme meagreness of the record, during the years when he was most prominent, deprives us of the details by which his service to the church might become better known. It was otherwise with his associate, Dr. Henry J. Ripley, who became a member

of this body early in 1827; for he remained a full half-century in the church, and for many years it was his own careful and accurate hand that kept the record. No figure in the history of the church is more familiar than his, and none is more suggestive of tender and beautiful remembrances. Strong in principle, immovable in fidelity to the truth, strict in his own interpretation of the law of righteousness, still he was everywhere known as the man of love, the faithful friend, the unwearying advocate of peace, the man whose presence in the church was the pledge of harmony in its counsels. Even down to old age, he was the friend and servant of the church. The loveliness of his spirit was never soured. He highly esteemed his younger brethren, and never supposed that godliness was leaving the earth with the generation to which he belonged. Such a lifetime as his in any church would be sufficient to establish a habit of peace; and that is exactly what his life did among us. Side by side with him stood Deacon Eben Stone, baptized at twelve years old, sixty years a member of the church, and forty-six years a deacon. Tried and true was he, a friend to whose lifelong and faithful service the younger generation is more indebted than it knows. He was a friend who never faltered. There was a time when his influence in the church was stronger, perhaps, than any other; and yet his influence was always modified by that of the wise and gentle spirit at his side, Dr. Ripley, with whom he labored in loving unity. He was looking forward to this centennial occasion, and hoping to contribute from his store of memories to this historical review; but he was called away at the beginning of last year. Associated with him were other faithful laymen of the same generation. Seth Davis was active in the church in those days; and so was Ebenezer Davis White; and so was Samuel Trowbridge,

who lingered among us till he had passed his ninetieth year; and so was his son Asa, afterward deacon. There were other professors in the Institution besides Dr. Chase and Dr. Ripley, but they did not hold as prominent a position in the church as these. The name of Dr. Sears often appears in the record during the time of his residence; and that of Dr. Hackett is mentioned less frequently, but often enough to show that he loved the church. In 1847, a new power came in when Gardner Colby was drawn hither by his devotion to the Theological Institution. A power he was, in any body of which he was a member; and in this quiet, rural community he was a power of a new kind. His coming was the beginning of the revolution. From the first, he was earnest in his devotion to the church, willing to work with his brethren, and able to influence them for good in new directions. What the history of the last thirty years would have been without him, it is hard to imagine; but it is certain that we owe very much to his liberal giving and his life-long interest in the church. And, as we look out into the new century, we hope to see one of his last wishes fulfilled, by his own liberality, in a new and better house of worship. Other names of high worth might be mentioned, among which stands that of the Rev. Jabez W. Parkhurst, who was with the church for twenty years, and whose quiet influence conspired with that of his brethren for the promotion of godliness and peace. Of the living, who are still members of the church, it is not well that I should speak; save that no one would forgive me if I failed to say that, in the true and gentle spirit that presides over the Institution now, the church has had, for nearly thirty years, a counsellor and friend whose influence, in favor at once of truth and of unity, has been of inestimable value. In recalling the good gifts of a century, we should be strangely

forgetful if we neglected to give thanks for the presence and work of Dr. Alvah Hovey. To Dr. Ripley and to him, very largely, it is due that unity has so nearly become habitual in this body.

A church connected so closely with a Theological Seminary might be expected to send into the ministry many of its sons; but the record of its contributions to the ministry, while it cannot be read without gratitude for their good quality, awakens surprise and disappointment at the smallness of their number. Within the first half-century, and before the founding of the Institution, four preachers were licensed from among the sons of the church, and one of them was ordained. Nathan Dana, one of the original members, was both licensed and ordained, and served in the ministry in Vermont. Charles Train, licensed in 1806, was the father of the Rev. Arthur Savage Train, who was well known here in later years. The father long served the church in Framingham, of which the son also was pastor at his death. Hadley Proctor, afterward in Vermont and in Maine, was licensed in 1817; and Francis G. Macomber, whose only pastorate, in Beverly, was cut short by his death in 1829, received license here in 1820. Within the second half-century, and since the founding of the Institution, only two who are strictly to be called sons of the church have been licensed to preach,— Daniel A. W. Smith in 1862 and Henry F. Colby in 1866. Edward O. Stevens, who was licensed in 1863 and ordained here in 1864, should be added; for his home had been for some years with this church, though he was not baptized here. Dr. Hackett was ordained here in 1839, after becoming a professor, and three other persons have been licensed by the church, and four have been ordained; but they were students of the Institution, who were preparing for the ministry before they

became members with us. From a worldly point of view, this state of things is, perhaps, natural enough; but, from a spiritual point of view, it certainly appears that the contribution of such a church to the ministry ought to have been larger.

The ministry has done more for the church than the church for the ministry. Among the names that have already been mentioned there have been many ministerial names that stand high in honor; and, if the whole company of ministers who have been members here could be seen together, a noble company it would be. There are about forty names of ordained ministers on the roll, though a few of these are the names of students who had already been ordained. All the professors in the Institution, except three, have brought their letters of dismission hither. When the last manual was printed, there were fifteen ordained ministers on the list. At the end of the century there were twelve. The presence of so many ministers in the church has been attended by certain inevitable disadvantages in repressing the activity of other members. But the ministers have been a blessing, and are a blessing still.

The church has had a Sunday-school since 1818 or 1819, — traditions differ as to the date,— when it was founded by Mrs. James Hyde in her own house. Father Grafton went to her, and said, calling her by her Christian name, "Well, the other churches are starting Sabbath-schools, and we must have a Sabbath-school." There are no early records of the school, but it is certain that on the list of the superintendents and teachers have been written names that have since been highly honored in Zion. Many students of the Institution have labored in this field; and it ought to be added that to the students the church has been indebted,

all through the half-century, for spiritual sympathy, and for help rendered in a hundred ways. The Sunday-school has been to a very large extent the training-school for the church. The church has a very pleasant history, indeed, in connection with the conversion of children. It is known that more than eighty persons have been received to membership at fourteen years old or under, and it is quite certain that this number falls below the truth. Some of these were the very best that we have had. It is a singular and interesting fact that the youngest person ever received to the church was among the first company that was baptized, ten days after the church was organized. On that 15th of July, 1780, Abigail Prout, aged eight years, received baptism. There is something unexplained about her; for her parents appear to have been living in Boston, and the church appointed a committee, two months after she was baptized, to go to Boston and converse with them, and also to take care of her, and provide a place for her to dwell, at the expense of the church. It is pleasant to think of the young church as accepting this strange trust from Divine Providence. This mysterious child stands, to us, in striking contrast with the old man from whose house she went out to be baptized. Noah Wiswall was born in 1699, and was in his eighty-first year when all this happened. He was a sturdy old man, who had gone down, five years earlier, to the battle-field of Lexington, "to see what the boys were doing," and had come home with a wounded hand and a British soldier's gun. It was in this patriarch's house that the child was made ready for baptism; and he, no doubt, was one of the company that walked with her across the road and through the field to the fair natural baptistery. She remained in the church ten years, and was then dismissed to the First Church in Boston.

The youthful Abigail Prout was the first to be provided for by the bounty of the church, but she was the first of a long succession. Through all these years, the church has been mindful of the poor. Two legacies for charitable purposes have been received from members, as well as three for general religious use; and there is frequent record of appropriations for the poor in the earlier time. In later years, the administration of such work has been in the hands of the deacons, and the details have not found their way into the record.

The church has abundant reason to be thankful for its many and long-continued relations with the great missionary work. In 1812, it joined the Boston Baptist Association, which was then formed; and perhaps this connection with a body nearer home than the large and scattered Warren Association quickened its interest in the general work of Christ's kingdom. In the next year, it was voted to take twelve copies of the *Baptist Missionary Magazine*, at the expense of the church. Three years later, this was discontinued, but the magazine was commended to the members of the body. In 1816, a contribution to the Education Society is recorded. According to the custom of the time, female societies were formed, for the support both of missions and of ministerial education, which existed for many years, and did efficient service. A contribution of $90 for foreign missions is mentioned in 1840, and more than once there is record of special efforts to aid in relieving the financial embarrassments of the Missionary Board. The *Macedonian* began to be taken in 1843, and the *Home Mission Record* also was for many years supplied to the members of the church. The concert of prayer for missions was established at an early date; and in 1854 there is allusion to a concert of prayer for home missions, held on the third Sunday evening in each month.

All the pastors have had a living interest in missions; and no church, with the possible exception of one or two, has had closer connections with our foreign missionary organization, or with the foreign field. For many years, we have been represented on the Executive Committee of the Missionary Union. This has been a frequent resting-place for missionaries on their return from their fields of labor. The mother of the sainted George Dana Boardman ended her days on earth as a member here. The children of missionaries have grown up among this people. Several brethren who have gone from the Institution to the foreign field have retained their connection with us; and one of these, Mr. Partridge, of Swatow, has just carried back with him to his field of labor the warm affection of the church. From our own number have gone out the Rev. Daniel A. W. Smith, son of the former pastor, and his wife, daughter of Dr. Stevens, of Rangoon; the Rev. Edward O. Stevens, son of Dr. Stevens, and his wife, daughter of Dr. Francis Mason, of Burmah; Miss Harriet E. Rice, who became the wife of the Rev. C. H. Carpenter, of Bassein; and Miss Sarah B. Barrows, now of Maulmain. Dr. Warren, the beloved and venerated Secretary of the Missionary Union, was active for many years in the work and counsels of this church, and his influence was a powerful help to the spirit of missionary consecration. The first suggestion of the Woman's Baptist Missionary Society arose within our limits, and the first meeting that led to its organization was held here. The women of this church have, from the beginning, been among the most active supporters of that Society. Just now, a new tie to bind the church to the foreign field has been established, in the Home for Missionaries' Children, that has just come into existence here. The church has an honor-

able record, too, among the givers for missionary work. There have been some years in which it gave more than any other church in America to the treasury of the Missionary Union. The spirit of benevolence has been so greatly developed in some larger and wealthier churches that this honor is not likely to come to this body again; but it is safe to predict that the interest in obeying the Lord's great command will not die out in a church to which that interest has been so great a blessing.

In other good works of various kinds, the church has taken from time to time an active part, and on various moral questions it has made its record. In 1850, it voted to assume the responsibility of $50 toward the sum of $2,800, provided the whole could be raised, to purchase the wife and four children of a colored Baptist minister from slavery in Tennessee, Mr. Colby offering to make up any deficit in the $50. In the following year, the money was called for, and was forwarded, Mr. Colby's part being about one-third. Earlier, in 1844, the church was consulted by a committee of the American Baptist Home Mission Society as to whether in its judgment the constitution of that body could be so modified as to "combine the harmonious action of brethren holding conflicting views on the subject of slavery, and whether any mode can be suggested for an amicable dissolution of the Home Mission Society." Into what a period of moral bondage and perplexity does the proposal carry back our minds! The church, in reply, did not venture any proposition, professing full confidence in the Board that had asked the questions; but its answer included this utterance, "We highly disapprove of the system of slavery, and we believe that those who live in the midst of it ought to make it their settled policy to bring about as speedily as possible its entire removal."

Is it right to leave the faults of the church unmentioned? Some of them have appeared incidentally in the story already told; but, in this day of grateful review, they shall not be made prominent. It is only right to say, however, that the greatest faults are of such a kind that the church itself is the chief sufferer from them, sometimes consciously and sometimes unconsciously. The history would be incomplete also, if it were not said that there are certain faults which a century has been too short to eradicate,—faults that appear in the earlier years and in the later. Perhaps the greatest is a certain narrowness of views and of administration in what may be called the home policy of the church. Both financially and in other aspects, the course of the church for a century at home has failed to appear as liberal and wise and large-hearted as its conduct with reference to the general interests of our Saviour's kingdom. In passing on to a new century, the church will do well to study its own record, that it may learn to avoid its own errors.

The quiet and uneventful character of this history cannot have failed to impress every hearer. Some Baptist churches that look back into the eighteenth century have a tragic story of resistance to oppression from the civil power, but this church is not quite old enough to remember such experiences. Some Baptist churches have had to fight their way up through bitter opposition from Christians of other denominations, and the peculiar principles of the Baptists have been forced into prominence by the strife; but no such conflicts are recorded here. Some churches have been torn by doctrinal differences; but, after the struggle of the first few years, this church was untroubled by such strifes. Some churches have been rent by personal contentions among brethren, quarrels and alienations that destroyed the general peace; but in this church there have been very few such

troubles, and none that became so general as permanently to affect the general welfare. "The son of peace" has been here, and the habit of loving and keeping harmony has grown strong by the practice of years. Some churches have had their life in communities where excitements abounded, and their course has partaken of the changefulness that was around them; but this church has dwelt in the most quiet of places, and lived the most equable of lives. Some churches have been radical and aggressive in their prevailing tone, and have thus been brought into oppositions and excitements; but few churches have been more steady and conservative than this. Perhaps it has been too conservative. It has become a leading church, partly by the providential assignment of its situation, partly by the character of the leading men that God has given it, and partly by its own quiet persistence in well-doing. Doubtless, it might have been more decidedly a leading church, if it had been able more efficiently to blend its various elements into a single life. But its quiet, uneventful history is a history full of blessing, for which we gratefully make acknowledgment to our God. As the church now looks forward into a second century, may the blessing of Heaven rest upon it! As God was with the fathers, so may he be with the children! This is a good day for self-examination and humility, for the putting away of faults, and for fresh consecration to all holy service. The times are new, and the fathers would scarcely recognize the world in which the children live. The second century is all unknown, except in this, that it will certainly be all unlike the first. The questions and conflicts of the time are new in form, old though the themes of thought may be. This church is to be larger and stronger, if it has wisdom to use its opportunities, than it has ever been yet. It is a

time for wisdom and for consecration. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation now as ever; and the church is the pillar and ground of the truth. The Lord is the strength of his people; and here may he make his blessing to rest, even life for evermore!

EVENING SERVICE.

ORGAN VOLUNTARY.

MUSIC. PRAYER.

HYMN.

ADDRESS OF WELCOME, . Rev. ALVAH HOVEY, D.D., LL.D.

ADDRESS, ... Rev. O. S. STEARNS, D.D.
Pastor from 1855 to 1868.

POEM, ... Mrs. W. N. CLARKE.
Read by Rev. Dr. Clarke.

HYMN.

ADDRESSES BY

J. G. WARREN, D.D., Rev. D. L. FURBER, D.D.,

H. M. KING, D.D., Mr. H. LINCOLN CHASE,

Rev. W. T. CHASE.

LETTER FROM Rev. H. L. COLBY.

DOXOLOGY. BENEDICTION.

ADDRESS OF WELCOME.

BY ALVAH HOVEY, D.D., LL.D.

Fathers and Brethren,— To me, as Chairman of the Committee of Arrangements, has been assigned the pleasant duty of welcoming you to this reunion, and of expressing to you our hope that it will prove delightful and profitable. Some of you are members of this church or congregation. some are neighbors and friends residing in this goodly city, and some are pastors or delegates from churches, a part of whose original members were taken from our ranks; and all of you are welcome to this place and to the memories of this hour.

This anniversary would naturally have been held on the fifth day of last July, when the church was just one hundred years old; but the people of Massachusetts, and indeed of the whole country, claimed that day in lieu of the fourth for the great national holiday; and we, as loyal citizens, yielded to their claims, postponing our celebration to the 14th of November. And now we have come together for a very simple and natural purpose,— to recall as much as we can of the past, to thank God for his care and love to this people during a hundred years, and to gird up the loins of our mind for Christian service in the future.

My own contribution to the story of the past will be small, for the time belongs to others; yet, were it proper, I could

easily detain you an hour with reminiscences of events in the life of this church during the last thirty-five years, the period through which it has been practically my religious home. And a delightful, peaceful home it has been,—a family of brothers and sisters, uncommonly free from wrath, strife, discord, or rivalry of any kind in their intercourse with one another. I think, and expect always to think, with great pleasure of the last three pastors,— two of whom are present, while one is on his way to the distant East,—and also of the most active members of the church, from the day when I entered the Seminary until now.

Especially do I recall at this moment the first meeting which I attended in the old vestry, nearly under the place where I now stand. Yet my memory is filled with the men who were there far more than with the small and low and uninviting room where they worshipped. I seem even now to see and hear Dr. Smith, Dr. Sears, and Dr. Ripley, together with Deacons Stone and White and Father Trowbridge, as they rose and spoke or prayed; for there was something very distinctive in the speech of every one of them, so that no person who had heard them utter a dozen sentences in a social meeting could ever, to the end of life, mistake any one of them, while in the act of speaking, for another person.

But I must not detain you by further remarks from the richer memories and better words of my brethren.

ADDRESS OF REV. O. S. STEARNS, D.D.,

Pastor from 1855 to 1868.

I have been requested by the committee for the centennial of our beloved church to recall briefly some of the facts pertaining to the period of my pastorate. The main facts have been recorded so minutely by my revered friend, Dr. Ripley, who was clerk of the church during most of my ministry, a model clerk as well as a model man, as to leave very little to be added. Any one who wishes to know what pastor and people were, and what they did officially, during those thirteen years, is commended to his faithful record. I put in this *caveat*, because, if my reminiscences of that period of the history of this church should seem to be too roseate, the final appeal can be made to the record itself. With age comes dimness of sight; and dimness of sight causes the foreground of the picture to be much more clearly defined than the background. My reminiscences will pertain to the foreground rather than to the background. I much prefer sunrises to sunsets, except as brilliant sunsets forecast brilliant sunrises. Constitutionally, I am a pessimist. Religiously, I am an optimist.

My ministry with this church began September 23, 1855. About a year previous to that date, I had been invited to this pastorate; but, having just begun my work with the South Baptist Church in Newark, N.J., I was compelled to

decline. My health, however, rendered a more northern climate a necessity; and, as a pastor for this church was not secured, I allowed my name to be presented again, on the condition that the people I was then serving would acquiesce in the call. Church was to appeal to church. If the church in Newton Centre could show cause why the South Church of Newark should yield to the request of a transfer of their pastor to another field of service, the sphere of my labors was to be here rather than there. I shall probably never forget my surprise when the late Dr. Sears rung my door-bell one Sunday morning in July, and announced his purpose to present the case to my people of Newark on that very day. He came suddenly and characteristically. He refused to preach for me, and persisted in being a hearer. He said he would be present at the prayer-meeting, and present his case. And, so delicately had he prepared himself to advocate his cause, he would not allow me to be absent from the same. The mutual kind feeling between the two churches as to the removal of a pastor from one church to another is on record; and I revive the fact simply to emphasize the cordial and Christian relations requisite between churches of the same denomination under similar circumstances. As the result, I became the pastor of this church at the date already mentioned.

A special reason for accepting this pastorate at that time, as presented to me by Dr. Sears, Dr. Hovey, and others, was the purpose, upon the part of many in the church, to blend together, so far as possible, the interests of the Institution with those of the church. The number of the students was then small; and, numerically, the church was small. It was believed that the co-operation of the students with the church, especially in the prayer-circle, might be mutually beneficial. And it was really in the hope of doing

some good in this direction that my decision, upon the second call of the church, was made. I loved the Institution then, as I do now; and I felt that, in a small community like ours, all the religious forces being concentrated to a given end, we might become a power for good beyond the circle in which we were accustomed to move. How heartily the officers of the Institution and the students responded to this plan is very pleasant to my memory. Dr. Ripley, my wise counsellor and the faithful servant of the church; Dr. Hovey, my time-tried friend and efficient coworker; Dr. Arnold, my constant and instructive aid in the prayer-meeting; Dr. Train, rich in suggestions from a long and successful pastorate; Dr. Pepper, always to be trusted and confided in; Dr. Hackett, the sharp critic, but the faithful attendant on the services of the sanctuary, and kind as sharp; and Dr. Anderson, sympathetic and faithful,—these, with Instructors Brooks, King, and Cushing, responded to my calls, and wrought with me enthusiastically; while, among the students, not a little were we aided in the choir, in the Sunday-school, and in the prayer-meetings by such men as those now well known,—H. M. Jones, J. C. Wightman, G. Bullen, G. B. Gow, A. Owen, H. A. Sawtelle, T. Whitfield, C. H. Corey, and many others.

So far as the church was concerned, however, it was a day of small things when I came to Newton. The number of members, as reported to the Association that year, was one hundred and thirty-seven; but very many of them were non-residents, while quite a percentage of the residents was unable to render much effective service on account of age, or on account of living at a distance from the places of prayer and worship. Moreover, aside from a very few, we were financially straitened. The meeting-house was undergoing repairs, but the vestry was damp and dreary. The

community was small, the people sparsely settled; and, although the new railroad facilities inspired hope of an increase to the population, for several years it was hope against hope, the railroad by its impoverished condition proving more of an incumbrance than an inspiration. I easily recall the saddened impression of the first Sunday when we entered our house of worship, just enlarged and renovated. For the first time, I saw realities. We had been worshipping with our neighbors, the Congregationalists; and I knew not in that combined audience who were mine and who belonged to Brother Furber. I found myself the pastor of a congregation numbering about sixty. The pews had previously been sold to the occupants; and, with peculiar modesty, none but those on the right and left of the pulpit had been purchased. From the pulpit to the choir, I had free course. There was not a soul in the middle row. I was to devote myself to the choir, or strike as I could right and left. I had come from a large church and a large congregation; and it is not wonderful that my heart sank within me, and that I often repeated during the succeeding night the lamentation of Amos, "How can Jacob stand, for it is small?" But the leading thoughts of that first service were acceptable to those who listened to me, and we welcomed the position to which Providence seemed to beckon us. My theme on that occasion was the elements of a prosperous congregation, from the 118th Psalm and 25th verse,— "O Lord, I beseech thee send now prosperity," — enumerating as these elements *sociality*, *compactness*, and *aggressiveness*. I made no promises, for promises like prophecy are best in their fulfilment; but I pledged my endeavors to devote all my powers to promote the well-being of the church. As I review the sermon, however, I find that I asked more from the people than I promised to do myself. I demanded, in

the name of my Master, hearty co-operation with me in all our social, religious, and public enterprises, assuring them that, when such co-operation ceased, my labors among them would cease; and, if there was prosperity, it was due to the congregation and the church as much as to their pastor. I had true yoke-fellows, and we were determined to move on. Such men as David H. Mason and George Lawton of the society, and Gardiner Colby, Alvah Hovey, Barnas Sears, Henry J. Ripley, Jabez W. Parkhurst, George J. Carlton, Jonah G. Warren, J. G. Gunderson, Eben Stone, Samuel Trowbridge, Z. Erastus Coffin, and James M. Pevear of the church, were not to be disheartened by appearances; and they resolved that, if progress was a possibility, progress should be secured. Subsequently, as the church grew by baptism and by the influx from neighboring churches, my additional co-workers were such as Thomas Nickerson, H. Lincoln Chase, George S. Dexter, Asa R. Trowbridge, Mrs. Abby Kinmouth (now Mrs. Brooks), Mrs. Roxana White, George and John H. Sanborn, Mellen Bray, S. C. Spaulding, Charles James, Charles K. Kirby, and others whom I might name. That with such co-laborers, under the divine blessing, there was sufficient progress to warrant grateful mention, appears by an extract from a sermon I preached at the close of the first seven years of my ministry. It reads as follows: "During these years, 65 have been added by baptism, and 55 by letter, lacking but 17 of a doubling of our membership; and yet on our roll to-day there are but 167 names, showing a net gain of only 30. This reduction, however, has been for our health. We have erased the names of those whose residence was unknown, or whose absence rendered such an act necessary; and we have urged with success all those who purposed to be absent but a short time to connect themselves

with other churches, that they might work the more efficiently where Providence temporarily located them. As a result of this latter movement, from a community especially noted for its unchangeableness, 65 have left us to work in other fields of usefulness. Were they all with us, our number would be 232, more than the average number of our congregation on the Sabbath. During this period, in addition to our current expenses and some $10,000 expended upon our house of worship and the chapel, and in addition to the same amount contributed for benevolent objects in a private way, the church has given for purposes of evangelization by home and foreign missions, within the six years ending last March, $6,695.19, or an average per annum of $1,115.86. And yet no one will say that this sum of about $17,000 has been the result of any very marked self-denial." Perhaps I may as well add here that from this time (1862), notwithstanding what we are wont to call war times, to the claims of which for means and men this church responded generously and *sacrificingly*, our benevolent contributions until the close of my ministry (1868) steadily increased, the amount being for the year 1862 $2,208.59, and that of 1867–68 $7,215.05; while during the year 1865, inclusive of special aid to special calls from Waterville College, Brown University, and the American Baptist Missionary Union, they amounted to $34,392.25.

This apparent growth was due, however, in a special manner to the faithful co-operation of the deacons of the church; and they deserve from me an honorable mention. At the beginning of my ministry there were but two, Deacon Eben Stone and Deacon E. Davis White. Deacon White, who had served the church long and well and had been peculiarly efficient in the Sunday-school, soon afterward removed from the town. Deacon Stone, who has so recently left us for a

higher and holier sphere, was true as steel. He loved this church as few ever did or could love it. He almost idolized it; and, in so doing, he purchased "a good degree." Then came in due time Z. Erastus Coffin, D. N. B. Coffin, Asa R. Trowbridge, Gustavus Forbes, and James S. Newell, all pure and true, wise in counsel, ever in sympathy with their pastor, with whom I labored on without a jarring note, and so far as I know, without a discordant thought. I often stirred them up, and doubtless surprised them by my plans and measures; but I do not recall a single suggestion they were not ready to entertain, and which, when deemed advisable, they did not accept and execute cheerfully and effectively.

In all the years of my ministry, so far as our growth was indicated by an increase of members to the congregation and to the church, by an increase of our benevolence, and, as I think, by an increase of faith in God and in love for the souls of men, it was due to the general harmony of thought and action, and a disposition on the part of all, the young, the middle-aged, and the old, the sisters and the brethren, to see eye in eye, to pardon the imperfections of the pastor, to work enthusiastically with the pastor, and to regard with reverence and Christian zeal the church of God as the body of Christ. The people had a mind to work. We sought to possess and manifest in the pulpit and in the pew a spiritual atmosphere, rendering the Sunday a holy day, making the house of God a sacred place, and working through personal agencies for the conversion of souls and the Christian growth of souls. By personal watch-care, the very few young persons in the church at my coming, and who had somewhat lapsed from their first love, were nourished into life, and became my best workers in the prayer-meeting and in the general outside work of the church. Through them and a

corps of helpers in the Sunday-school, the mission stations at Oak Hill and at Thompsonville were started and provided for. The sermons, so far as they could be called sermons, for they were rather the weekly correspondence of the pastor with his people, were aimed at an immediate and direct effect. They were often deplorable failures; but their purpose was to do a present good, and gird up for the toils and struggles of the ensuing week. There are scores of them in the old barrel which will never see any light but the light of the fire, because totally useless except for the occasion when they were preached. Some of them were old ones; and yet they were deemed, on more than one occasion, so new as to be pointed and personal. I remember a summons by a parishioner to my parlor one Monday morning, to reprove me for personalities in the pulpit the previous Sunday; he earnestly requesting that, if I wished to rebuke him, I would speak to him privately. But when I told him that that sermon was written and preached, word for word, many years before in Southbridge, when I could not possibly be purposing to reprove him personally, he left. I remember another occasion, when, speaking of the depravity of human nature, I used several passages of Scripture, and among others quoted the language of Isaiah, "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." A kind neighbor, a regular attendant on my ministry, and who prided himself upon his pure life, reproved me for the severity of my language, asking me if I deemed him as bad as my language implied. And when I replied in the affirmative, but that there was a divine power which would change filthy rags into pure white paper, he seemed a little mollified, and concluded he would hear me again. And I remember how sensitive my good people were concerning the introduction of secular and political subjects into the pulpit, much more

so then than you would be now. On one occasion, I spoke out boldly during the war concerning what I deemed a grave public crime. One of my best friends was aggrieved, and kindly but faithfully assured me of the fact. But as time passed on, and I was pressed for a Thanksgiving sermon, I had the hardihood to bring that condemned sermon into the service, with some modifications and additions, when, to my surprise, who but that same good brother should call on the congregation for its publication? He had forgotten the old one in his zeal for the pertinency of the new one. These things were the spice of a ministry which I love to recall, because it shows how tenderly and yet watchfully those with whom I wrought waited on that ministry to preserve its soundness, its progressiveness, and its truthfulness.

But I must not dwell longer on scenes so fragrant to my memory. Most of those who were my co-laborers when I came here have gone to their reward in heaven. Those thirteen years were years of toil, struggle, and self-sacrifice but they were years of exquisite harmony, Christian growth, and Christian power. The Christian element in our congregations was not so exclusively Baptist as now, there were a few of many kinds; but we strove together, endeavoring to "keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." The material to be gathered in was much less than now; but, by unity of effort between Dr. Furber and myself, we sought to reach with the gospel every Protestant family within our legitimate bounds. The two churches wrought side by side in mutual love and with mutual zeal.

The history of this church, during a life of a century, is a history of which none of us may be ashamed. "The little one has not become a thousand," but her voice has been heard and felt on heathen as well as on Christian shores. My part in the result is scarcely worthy of mention. But

I love to review it, and ascribe all the good in it to the wonderful grace of God. An item in the records of the church, at the close of my ministry, states that the number of persons admitted by baptism was 111, by letter 98, total 209, and that my texts on the last day of my official services were, in the morning, Galatians i., 11,—"I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man"; and in the afternoon, Revelations xxii., 21,—"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen." Certainly, these two texts expressed my purpose for you, and my benediction upon you. Let me close by quoting the last sentences in my letter of resignation: "The past is no longer ours. The future opens before us. Mutually forgiving and mutually striving for still greater efficiency, let me assure you of my unchanging and unchangeable desire for your constantly progressive prosperity. 'Because of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good.'"

It was expected that a hymn or poem, which the Rev. S. F. Smith, D.D., pastor of the church from 1842 to 1854, had engaged to write for this occasion, if possible, before reaching England on his way to Burmah, would be read at this point. But the chairman was obliged to express his regret that the poem (undoubtedly a good one) had not been received, and of course could not be read. Fortunately, however, Mrs. Emily S. Clarke had written the following poem, which was read, after a few words of explanation, by Dr. W. N. Clarke, a very welcome and unexpected pleasure to the assembly: —

FATHER GRAFTON'S EYES.

One man in homely homespun,
With dark and flashing eyes, —
A brave and leading spirit
No homespun could disguise.

One in commander's costume,
With nobly chiselled face, —
A man of storied lineage
And every courtly grace.

Once in the Revolution,
Some unknown day they met:
The one was Joseph Grafton,
The other Lafayette.

And both were full of ardor,
Both in the flush of youth,
And both in love with freedom,
Loyal to right and truth.

They met with souls unveiled,
No record how or when;
And each one in the other
Discerned a king of men.

They met and spoke and parted:
One made his noble name
A thousand-fold more noble,—
Each school-child knows his fame.

And one, obscurely serving,
A rustic folk did guide,
In love and peace and wisdom,
The fount of life beside.

Long had the war been over,
Full forty years had passed,
When, to the land that loved him,
The hero came at last.

But oft in vain and sadly
Familiar forms he sought:
These people were the children
Of those for whom he fought.

Of all the patriot soldiers
That long ago he led,
How few were left to greet him!
And Washington was dead.

But now once more in Boston,
Upon the State House stair,
He saw among the strangers,
Thronging to meet him there,

One somewhat quaint of figure,
Somewhat old-fashioned grown,
In breeches, hose, and buckles,
With wig of rusty brown;

And might have seen unnoting,
Save for a piercing glance,
A look still unforgotten
Through years in far-off France,

That woke a recognition,
A throb of pleased surprise.
He cried: "There's Mr. Grafton!
I know him by his eyes."

The people tell the story,
Their loving pride aglow,
To think their modest pastor
Should be remembered so.

Yet 'tis indeed no marvel,
Though even eyes grow old,
When youth's impulsive ardor
Has left but ashes cold.

For in his soul is springing
The well of holy truth,
The spirit's strong elixir
Of bright, immortal youth.

Though years have left their traces,
No marks of age disguise
The soul that looks out grandly
Through Father Grafton's eyes.

ADDRESS BY REV. DR. J. G. WARREN,

DELEGATE FROM THE BAPTIST CHURCH AT NEWTON UPPER FALLS.

It is already eight o'clock, and I must put myself in as small a compass as possible, so as to leave room for the many who, I see by the programme, are to follow me. Being here as one member of a delegation from the Second Baptist Church in Newton, one of your daughters in the Christian family, and having been requested to represent that delegation, I should naturally be expected to give you an outline of her fortunes since, in 1835, she set off by herself on the journey of life. With that end in view, I had indeed drawn out a statement embodying the leading events of a history, covering full forty-five years, all of which I here pass into your hands, to be used as your committee and the body you act for may deem best. I will employ my time in turning the thoughts of the friends before me in another direction, and will seek to introduce yourself and them to this mother of churches and its venerable pastor, as they presented themselves to my eyes in 1836. At that time, public worship was still held in the old meeting-house, whose frame retains its original location yonder on the banks of "Baptist Pond."

I invite each one of you to take a seat at my side, with the singers, on a Lord's day morning, with eyes and ears open, so as to take in all there is around us.

Asa R. Trowbridge, young, hopeful, and full of music as

he has ever been to this hour, has charge of the choir. George C. Chandler, my seminary classmate, who at last accounts was living on the westernmost slope of the Rocky Mountains, in far-off Oregon, and shaking in every limb with paralysis, stands at my left hand and helps me sing bass. At my right hand is Miss Trowbridge, afterward Mrs. Captain Bacon, and now living in yonder chamber, shut almost entirely out from the light of day, and unable for years to read a line of the Word of God. Beyond her is Emily Langley, with a younger sister, whose parents had only recently removed to Newton from Roxbury, and taken possession of the old homestead of the Whites, the spacious house still standing near the big poplar, east of the railroad depot.

Looking about the house, you will recognize the Kings, the Stones, and, I think, also the Richardses, some five or six families in all, from Oak Hill; the Thorntons, Pierces, and Hydes, from the South End, now the Highlands; the Lyon brothers, paper-makers, from the Lower Falls; the Lothrops, Lambs, Davises, and Bacons, from West Newton; the Bullough family, from what is now Newtonville; the Hydes, a single family from the Corner; the Pettis family, from East Newton, filling full the north-east corner pew; and, last, the Trowbridges, the White brothers, both still living, the Langleys and Bartletts, with Professors Chase, Ripley, and Knowles, here at the Centre,— in all, say twenty-five families, only six or eight of which are at present represented in your assemblies. These, with here and there a stranger and a half-score of students from the Seminary, make up a congregation ranging, according to the state of the weather, from fifty to one hundred. It is a day of small things for "Father Grafton's church," which had formerly gathered its congregation, to the utmost capacity of the house, from all the

neighboring towns, and had only the previous year given off full fifty members to set up its youngest daughter at the Upper Falls.

Looking across to the other end of the house, whom do we see in the pulpit? The long-time pastor is there, bending under the weight of years, and yet, by the considerate courtesy of the church, retaining in name and in reality the position of pastor. By his side sits Rev. Frederick A. Willard, who, after a brief term as pastor of the First Baptist Church at Worcester, only a short time ago has been associated as colleague with Father Grafton. It has been arranged between them that the senior pastor shall preach this morning, and, in fact, take nearly all parts of the service. As he rises to give the opening hymn, you see but the remnant of what he once presented to the worshippers in this house; but there is enough left of him to draw and fix my attention till the last word drops from his lips. He is small in figure, only a little taller and slightly, if at all, more stocky than Dr. Stearns, with thin face, keen, quick, black eyes, which roll nervously in their sockets, and become the prompt vehicle for conveying to all beholders every emotion and passion which, in rapid succession, play in his bosom. Before the reading of the first hymn is finished, all this comes out; for the sentiment of the hymn, in every line and every word, is in him, and he places the emphasis where it belongs.

The singing over, he *prays*, and, in the most simple words and the most engaging manner, goes for himself to the mercy-seat, and takes us all along with him. He does not "make a prayer,"—that gravest misnomer among men, that supremest abomination in the sight of Heaven! He *prays*, in language of contrition, confession, adoration, entreaty, thanksgiving, seldom, almost never, after the first address to the High and Holy One, repeating that hallowed

name, but, by the most natural and easy transition of thought and utterance from topic to topic, rising higher and higher on devotion's wing, and entering with his whole being into communion with the Father of Spirits, leaving all mortal surroundings behind. Such a prayer! Such an outpouring of soul! Like the angels in old Jacob's vision, descending and ascending on the ladder, so he ascended and descended on the Son of Man, the Son of God, the sole medium of communication between heaven and earth.

Another song of praise, and he announces his text: "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light" (Col. i., 12). Yes: this is it exactly, indelibly fixed in my memory. The whole scene has been before me times and times, and never can be erased from the tablet of my mind. Most likely, I shall meet Father Grafton on the golden pavements of the New Jerusalem, and tell him how much I owe him for that prayer and that sermon. Why not!

But "Father Grafton" is preaching, and we must see to it that we lose no part of the sermon. In his peculiar style of conception and of utterance, and with one eye partly closed, as was his wont when something original or comical or witty was coming out of his mouth, he announces his theme, "Heaven, a Prepared Place for a Prepared People," and then goes on with a sermon, of which the following is an outline: —

What is it to be meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light? How shall we obtain that meetness?

"In light." Light is the Scripture term for truth; and, when truth is held in the mind and embraced by the heart, it is the comprehensive term for knowledge of divine things or "experimental religion," — a knowledge that, beginning here, shall go on increasing and expanding endlessly. "Then shall I know even as also I am known."

"Saints." These are the subjects of grace, the sanctified ones, the holy ones, the pure in heart. "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God." "We shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

"The inheritance." Inheritance is something *given* to the *heir*, and so is nothing he *can claim on the ground of personal merit.* It is a bestowment of grace, simple, pure, sovereign grace,—"grace abounding to the chief of sinners."

"Partakers." How partakers? Not by the hand, as I receive a gift of gold or silver or precious stones from you. The treasure is suited to the mind, the heart, the spiritual part of us; and it must be received by the mind, the will, the affections. It must be taken by faith, and a faith that "worketh by love."

"Partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." Knowledge, holiness, self-abasement, a receptive faith,—these are the elements of fitness for that state, and these combined will give birth to all acts of service, adoration, thanksgiving and praise in that blessed land.

But in what way shall this meetness be obtained by such vile sinners as we are? To this question, but one satisfying answer can be given to a sin-ruined soul, awaked now to a sense of guilt and condemnation. To this question, our Father in heaven has given but one answer, and man has devised nothing to equal it. The sacrifice at Calvary is the one effective offering in atonement for man's sin. The fountain there opened in blood washes away the last stain of guilt. The soul, accepting that offering, as made in his behalf, and bathing in that fountain, has *already received a full and complete redemption, and is on the instant counted meet by the God of all grace for the inheritance of the saints in light.* Heaven's high court demands no other satisfaction: earth's utmost deservings, all brought together and laid on one altar,

could not ransom a single transgressor. To this, beloved, you are all shut up: it is this or nothing.

"Sovereign grace hath power alone
To subdue a heart of stone;
And the moment grace is felt,
Then the hardest heart will melt."

But, brethren, the washed and regenerated are not all taken at once to heaven: only a few of them compared with the whole number are. They are kept here "to shine as lights in the world"; and, being kept here, they soon find remnants of the "old man" lurking within, and often showing themselves in acts of unworthiness and disobedience, the outside world, meantime, also tempting and alluring from the path of rectitude. From each of them, the cry goes forth with a strong importunity, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Here, my beloved, comes in the process of training, of teaching, and of discipline, and also the process of bestowing "more grace" and crowning that grace with glory, while "we look for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the Great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

The sermon is ended, and I sit entranced. I made no note of it on paper at the time, nor have I since. It was written as I verily believe by the finger of the Holy Spirit on the tablet of my heart, to remain forever. "My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (I. Cor. ii., 4, 5).

I have already placed Father Grafton, in his physical

development, by the side of one of your more recent pastors; and I may be pardoned, if I here trace the likeness between them in other respects, as I have read and do still read the two characters. Is one a poem? So was the other. Is one an electrical machine, sending off flashes of light? So was the other. Is one, at times, a galvanic battery in full blast? So was the other. You could not touch Father Grafton, even in old age, but the fire would fly,—not a fire to scorch and blister, but to warm and soothe, enlighten and cheer you. Is the one you still have among you, a specimen of whose shining we have just seen, an aurora borealis, streaming up from the northern depths, with all colors from the palest white to the intensest crimson, and mixing all these up in most splendid combination, filling the entire firmament with glory? Father Grafton was not adequate to this variety of exhibition, but he could and did flash in the most engaging manner; and whoever once saw and heard him could never forget the scene.

In point of acquirements, literary and theological,—in what we moderns denominate scholarship,—the long-ago-departed one did not compare with the living one; but he *knew one book, the Bible.* The Bible in English he knew, both by head and by heart; and large parts of it he had at his tongue's end, to come off in the most apt and fitting quotations, to suit the instant demand. Few preachers have ever equalled him in this. There was an aptness and a wit at this point almost marvellous. Once upon a time, receiving an unexpected token of kindness from a friend, he remained silent for a moment, as if not knowing what to say, and then exclaimed, "I will go and tell Jesus!" This peculiarity came out in the seclusion of the home circle, when moving among the families of his loved flock, when meeting a friend or a stranger by the wayside, at all times and everywhere.

The Word of God had taken possession of his being, and flowed out as waters from a living fountain.

Another book he read as few men ever read it, the book of human hearts. He knew himself, as revealed to himself by the ministration of the Highest; and this helped him to know others. "As face answereth to face in a glass, so the heart of man to man." Going abroad, he everywhere opened the doors of his heart, by the tongue, by the eyes, by the muscles of his face, by the very movements and motions of his body, and let his heart flow out in the most unrestrained and lavish manner into other hearts. And what followed,—followed with the certainty of a law? This followed: every heart he touched opened up in turn to him, and at a glance he read every emotion of every one. He gave himself to all, all gave themselves to him. He was one of the quickest, keenest, shrewdest judges of human kind that ever trod the soil of Newton; and he had the most exactly fitting word for every one he fell in with, no matter where or when. He was nimble as a cat in limb, in thought, in tongue. No one ever caught him napping. A match and more than a match was he for all sorts of persons, in all grades of society, and in every possible emergency.

Besides, he was pre-eminently anointed by the Holy One, that supremest gift of the minister of Christ, and of every Christian as well. "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things" (I. John ii., 20). Unction! Do you know, Brother Hovey, what a world of meaning,—do you know, Brother Carlton, what a world of meaning is in that single word of Holy Scripture? Do you know what gifts and graces are wrapped up in it? Do you know how sweet it sounds in my ears? Unction! *chrisma!* chrism! anointing! Read it again, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." What is it

to know all things, to be led by the Spirit into all truth? What is it to go out and in, up and down, through and through, the endless, glorious realms of truth, as written in Holy Scripture, under the guidance of the Spirit of light and love and holiness, while new and yet richer treasures are constantly opening on the vision? These questions Father Grafton could answer; for so was he led into all the truth, and, being thus led, he had the best of fitting up for a messenger of salvation. "The letter killeth, but *the spirit giveth life*."

It is yours, Brother Chairman, to deal out the letter of the Word of God to my junior brothers, who are to minister in holy things when I am gone. Don't you sometimes wish and almost pray for the power to impart to them "the unction from the Holy One"?

Thus armed, Father Grafton was a power always and everywhere. It became his duty to serve for a long period as chaplain of the Regiment of State Militia, mustering annually in this vicinity,— a service he performed with admirable tact, urbanity, and gravity. As he was every inch a Christian, so was he in all his make-up a gentleman and a nobleman. While the freest of all men in deportment, no one ever felt at liberty to obtrude on his rightful domain, or invade his personal or official prerogatives. Dignified, courteous, and respectful, to the last degree, in his bearing toward fellow-soldiers of all grades, he was sure to receive from all what he never failed to bestow, and so became a universal favorite.

Nor was this all. He had a capacious soul. He was a human being, a fellow-man. No man ever sat more gracefully on a horse than he; and, when the regiment was drawn up in hollow square, to seek the blessing of God, he, as leader for all, went, as he did in his own pulpit, for himself

and for them to the throne of the heavenly mercy, and almost before they were aware of it they found themselves with hearts touched and eyes moistened. They could not help it. He could not do otherwise. It was his deeply religious nature flowing into them, and through them up to a common Father and Deliverer. His voice, never of large compass, never swelling into stentorian strains, was silvery, mellow, and sweet, and glided into the ear like enchantment. All men loved him. All wanted to be where he was. I am done.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF SECOND BAPTIST CHURCH.

The following historical sketch of the Second Baptist Church in Newton, worshipping at the Upper Falls, was handed to the chairman by Dr. Warren.

The years 1830, 1831, and 1832 were made memorable in the history of Newton by an unusual bestowment of God's grace, of which blessing the inhabitants of the Upper Falls received a large share. Many persons became Christians; and a large number of them united with the First Baptist Church, of which the venerable Joseph Grafton was still pastor. Meetings were held for some time in the village school-house; but, as objection arose in certain quarters to such a use of the building, they were removed to the dwelling-house of Mr. Samuel Bixby, soon after which an effort was made to erect a meeting-house. This object was accomplished,

and the house recently remodelled was dedicated March 27, 1833. The names of Bixby, Kingsbury, Keyes, Smith, and others, were prominent in this good work.

The church was organized February 8, 1835; and on September 7th of the following year Mr. Origen Crane, a graduate of the Theological Seminary, became pastor, and held the office till July 9, 1840, a term of nearly five years. Mr. Crane was followed by Charles W. Dennison, from December, 1841, to February, 1843; and he, by Samuel S. Leighton, from February, 1846, to May, 1848. In November of that year, Amos Webster took the pastoral care, and held it six years and a quarter, or till September, 1854. He was followed by Dr. S. F. Smith, who supplied the pulpit and performed pastoral duties a period of seven years, residing at the Centre, where he had previously served the mother church a term of twelve years.

Dr. Smith was succeeded by Rev. W. C. Richards, who had the oversight of the flock at two periods, in all full eight years, and who still lives among his own people, respected and beloved by all.

It will be seen from the above-named specifications of time that the church has had the service of a pastor, or a continuous supply, almost two-thirds of the whole period of its existence; that is to say, thirty out of forty-five years.

All these pastors were blessed in their efforts to save souls and build up the church. During Mr. Crane's term of service, forty-eight were received by baptism; Mr. Dennison's, forty; Mr. Webster's, eight; Dr. Smith's, eleven; and Mr. Richards', twenty-one. Under the personal supervision of the last-named pastor, the vestry was improved, the house repaired and painted throughout, a bell placed in the tower, and the organ now in use procured.

For the present improved condition of the house and the

hopeful prospects of the church and congregation, much is due to the persistent and well-directed labors of Mr. Whitman, a member of the present Senior Class in the Seminary. For the last year and a half, he has been the leader of the flock, and continues in that relation. According to the best evidence to be derived from the records, the admissions to membership have been as follows : —

Original members,	56
Admitted by baptism,	195
Admitted by letter,	146
Total,	397

Of these have been

Dismissed,	183
Excluded and erased,	59
Removed by death,	55
Total,	297

Leaving one hundred to be accounted for. Of these, about fifty are known to be alive, and are within the call of the church-going-bell ; while as many more have gone, one by one, to remote places, some to the land of the blessed, we may believe.

"And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not consumed."—Exodus iii., 3.

ADDRESS OF REV. H. M. KING, D.D.

PASTOR OF THE DUDLEY STREET BAPTIST CHURCH, ROXBURY, MASS.

I REGRET exceedingly that I could not be present at your service this morning, and listen to the valuable historical discourse of Rev. Dr. Clarke; for if there is anything in which we should take the deepest interest, and which we should record with devout gratitude, it is the history of our churches, which shows the gracious dealings of God with his people. But I rejoice that I am permitted to be with you this evening, and bring to you my sincere congratulations, and those of my church, on this your hundredth anniversary.

I have been trying to determine the exact relationship of the church which I serve to the Baptist church in Newton Centre. When there were fewer Baptist churches than there are now, the members of a church were widely scattered. At the beginning of the present century, some of the families of this church resided in Brookline. Among them were the well-known families of Deacons Griggs and Corey. In 1817, when the First Baptist Church in Cambridge was organized, they became constituent members of it. In 1821, when the church in Roxbury — now the Dudley Street Church — was formed, they became constituent and very active members of that. After the lapse of seven years, when the Baptists of Brookline became sufficiently strong

and numerous to have a church there, Deacons Griggs and Corey were active in its organization; and they and their families and other members were dismissed from the Roxbury church to constitute the church in Brookline. Their removal from the church in Roxbury was a very serious loss to it. It took away its two deacons, its clerk, its treasurer, a large and substantial part of its members, and almost the breath of life; for the church was but seven years of age, and by no means strong. These two respected families (it should be stated that Deacon Thomas Griggs is still living in Brookline, at the advanced age of ninety-two years) seem to have been the connecting link between these four churches, all of which are now vigorous and influential. It was good stuff to make Baptist churches of. While therefore the Dudley Street Church can hardly claim the honor of being a daughter of this church, whose centennial anniversary is celebrated to-day, it may claim, I think, to be a very near grand-daughter, and has a right to send its delegates to participate in these commemorative services. I would also take this opportunity gratefully to acknowledge in behalf of my church the fact that, subsequent to its organization, some of its most useful and valuable members have come to it from the Newton Centre church.

Allow me to congratulate you, first, on the succession of able and faithful pastors whose labors this church has enjoyed during the hundred years of its existence. Few churches, I think, have been so greatly blessed in this respect. Some of these pastors I have been permitted to call my personal friends, and their friendship has been an inspiration and a help to me. At the time when I was a student in the Seminary, Rev. Dr. Stearns was your pastor; and it was my privilege to sit many Sabbaths under his ministry, and to listen to those sermons which he has been pleased

modestly to call "deplorable failures," and I can assure you that I have been striving in my preaching for eighteen years to approach somewhere near to those "deplorable failures," and have not been able.

The acquaintance of Rev. Dr. Smith I have long enjoyed; and, in common with the entire denomination, I love to do honor to his genius, which has composed some of our sweetest and most spiritual hymns. Of your late pastor, Rev. Dr. Clarke, with whom my relations have been most cordial and, to me, most delightful, I need only say that his removal to another field of labor has left a vacancy in our ministerial circle which will not soon be filled.

My personal recollections of "Father" Grafton, by whose long ministry this church was peculiarly honored, are not *very distinct*, as he died before I was born. If I have known him in some pre-existent state, I have been unable to recognize him in the not very flattering picture of him which I have seen. He must have been a man of remarkable powers, and greatly beloved by his people. We have some members still living in Roxbury who were baptized by him, and who love to recognize him as their spiritual father, and to speak of his excellencies and peculiarities. Some years ago, I was called to attend the funeral of an aged Christian woman in a family all of whose members were strangers to me. The children had departed from their mother's faith, but still cherished so much respect for it and for her that they wished a Baptist minister to officiate at her funeral. After the service, a daughter of the departed saint called upon me, bringing a little gift which she said had been very precious to her mother, and which she wished me to accept. It was a small picture of Father Grafton. Next to her Bible, she had prized this memento of her former pastor. Her loving hand had clasped it as long as

it could clasp anything, and had surrendered it only when it was cold in death.

Father Grafton, it is reported, was somewhat given to eccentricities. One illustration of his eccentric sayings and doings I now recall. A couple whom he had united in marriage, finding after a little experience that they did not live happily together, came back to him to inquire if he could not undo what he had done, and separate them without the process of legal divorce. "Certainly I can," said Mr. Grafton; and, conducting them to the roadside in front of his house, he told them to face in opposite directions, one toward the east and the other toward the west, and then said to the husband, "You go this way," and to the wife, "You go that way," and to both, "Don't you ever stop."

Father Grafton was held in high esteem by his contemporaries. In the year 1831, the Boston Baptist Association held its twentieth anniversary "at the Baptist Meeting-house, Roxbury." Rev. Dr. Sharp presided, as was often the case; for the Lord made him to preside, and his brethren loved to recognize the fact. Sermons were preached on that occasion by Rev. Henry Jackson, Rev. John O. Choules, who was a delegate from the Warren Association, Rev. James D. Knowles, Rev. Daniel Sharp, and Rev. Francis Wayland, Jr. The circular letter was read by Prof. Irah Chase, and was, of course, sound and good. It was a rare occasion, and we are ready to exclaim, "There were giants in those days." But what gave special interest to that occasion and is worthy of special mention on this occasion is this item in the minutes: "The venerable and beloved father, Joseph Grafton, who is in the seventy-fifth year of his age, the fifty-first of his ministry, and the forty-fourth of his present pastoral connection, being ordained as their pastor in 1778 [should be 1788], by request of the

moderator addressed the Association in substance as follows."

The address was an earnest and a fatherly exhortation to his brethren in the ministry to carefully distinguish between "a religious excitement" and "a revival of religion," and closed with an affectionate appeal to them to cultivate above all things else the grace of personal humility. The last sentences were words of solemn farewell, a patriarchal benediction :—

"I am happy, my dear brethren, to meet you once more on this anniversary occasion. Perhaps it may be the last time. Soon I expect to follow my fathers and former contemporaries. I thank you, my junior brethren, for all that affection and attention you have shown me at all times, and on all occasions when we have been together. May God bless you, and render you abundantly useful in your lives and among your people. And should it be that I shall not meet you again on such occasion, oh, may we meet in that great association on high, where we shall unite with all the redeemed of the Lamb here below! With these feelings, I bid you an affectionate farewell. In case when you come together at Newton [the Association had been invited to hold its next annual meeting here], you shall find my place vacated by death, *then, and ever after*, remember my last and only words,— BE HUMBLE."

But God was not quite ready to take the patriarch to his fathers. His work was not yet done, and his cup of earthly joy not yet filled. When the Association met here the next year, Father Grafton was not only living, but was able to report that seventy-nine persons had been baptized during the year. The year following, the church received twenty-four more. At that advanced age, the pastor was permitted to enjoy one of the richest and most fruitful revivals in all

his long ministry. "They shall still bring forth fruit in old age."

Allow me, in the second place, to congratulate you on the good men and true, and good women also, who have here labored and prayed for the prosperity of this church, and have ripened for the heavenly kingdom. How little of the history of a church of Christ can be written or told! How little of the anxiety and joy, the struggle and blessing, the toil and self-denial, the comfort and reward, the life that has gone into it, and the life that has come out of it in strengthened faith and developed character and preparation for heaven! Churches, even spiritual churches, are not built and maintained except by prayer and labor, consecration and material sacrifice. These hundred years of growth and prosperity have cost something. There have been warm hearts and earnest hands, and names that have shone on your list of members, but shine more brightly in the Book of Life. With how many families, their deepest and richest life, has the life of this church been interwoven, as the generations have come and gone! Many names you will cherish, and your children after you, of the honest, faithful builders and toilers of the past, who have made this church their care, and God's service their delight. They are your joy and rejoicing to-day, your crown of glory. These names are your rich heritage. Their example will be a perpetual inspiration, and their memory a benediction. "They have labored, and you have entered into their labors."

May I suggest that, in one or two respects, your situation has been peculiar? For more than fifty years, you have been very intimately related to our Theological Seminary. I need not speak of the help which the Seminary through its professors has been to you. Undoubtedly, that has been sufficiently brought to your notice to-day. But who can tell

what a help you have been to it, and what a heavy responsibility you have constantly felt for its character and orthodoxy! And who can tell how great a debt of obligation all our churches are under to this church for its prayerful and laborious fidelity in this respect! Of one thing, we may be certain,—that, so long as the Seminary is under your immediate supervision, its doctrinal position will be established.

Then, too, the community in which you are situated is a very *respectable* community, composed of well-to-do, moral families, who, for the most part, are, or think they are, in little or no need of the gospel, as it is preached from this pulpit. This may possibly have seemed to you to be an obstacle in the way of rapid growth and large usefulness. I remember to have heard one of your good pastors say that "it would be a real luxury to have a sinner — one who felt himself to be a sinner — move into the town, and become a member of the congregation."

But, to speak more seriously, I can say in words of sincere commendation that this church has been distinguished above most churches for two things. First, you have possessed and exhibited a generous and constant interest in ministerial education. Students preparing for the Christian ministry have had a large place in your benevolent thought. Undoubtedly, your proximity to the Seminary has served to keep you acquainted with their needs; and, as they have come and gone year after year, your sympathies have ever been kept in active exercise. And not only have you contributed generously toward their support, both through the Educational Society and your Students' Aid Society, and through more private channels, but you have cheerfully extended to them what is no less valuable and no less appreciated, the kind hospitality of the church and of your pleasant homes. I am happy to have this opportunity to make grate-

ful mention of the abiding memory of many such thoughtful courtesies which brightened my seminary life. On the apostle Paul rested "the care of all the churches." You have cheerfully taken upon yourselves the care of all the ministers.

And, secondly, you have always manifested a praiseworthy interest in the great cause of foreign missions. Few churches have made annually such large contributions of money to the treasury of the Missionary Union; and few churches have had so many noble representatives among their own members actively engaged in preaching the gospel of Christ to heathen nations.

And now, O venerable mother of churches, the first century of your life has ended, and the record of a hundred years has closed; and you have come, not down to old age, weakness, and decrepitude, but up to a well-developed maturity, to that ever-fresh renewal of strength which is promised to those who wait upon the Lord. And what a century it has been! And how many changes it has brought about in our own country and among the nations of the earth, in this community and in the homes that compose it, and above all, it may be, in the Christian denomination with which we are connected! A hundred years ago, when this church was planted here, a Baptist church was a rare and solitary and singular thing; and our denomination had little position or social or moral influence. Here and there, a feeble Baptist church humbly begged permission to live and breathe. There were two churches in Boston (organized respectively in 1665 and 1743), in both of which there were less than two hundred members. There were two churches in Middleboro (1756 and 1761), one in Medfield (1776), one in Haverhill (1765), one in Attleboro (1769), and one in Chelmsford (1771). And these were all the Baptist churches there were

in this whole section of Massachusetts. In the same year in which this church was constituted, churches were formed in Dighton and Fall River; and in the following year the Woburn church had its birth. But now, after the lapse of a single century, flourishing Baptist churches exist, not only in the cities and larger towns, but in almost every village. They have sprung up everywhere, as if from seed scattered by invisible hands. God has made us a great people, and given us an acknowledged place and a work among the evangelizing agencies of this land and of all lands.

We do not estimate the life of a church as we estimate the life of a man. In one of the prophetic descriptions of the future glory of Zion, it is said, "The child shall die a hundred years old." I wish to say to-night, this church, a hundred years old, shall live, and be more beautiful, more vigorous, more fruitful in the future than even it has been in the past.

ADDRESS OF REV. W. T. CHASE,

PASTOR OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, CAMBRIDGE.

The records of the First Baptist Church of Cambridge begin with the statement that "a meeting of the professed friends of Christ of the Baptist Denomination in Cambridge and vicinity was held at the house of Mr. James Hovey, in the month of March, 1817, for the purpose of relating the exercises of their minds relative to the propriety of covenanting to walk together as a church of Christ.

"At the same meeting, it was voted that, when in the opinion of our respected fathers in the ministry it shall appear expedient, we do esteem it our duty thus to unite."

These "professed friends of Christ" had sustained meetings for prayer and conference for about a year previous to this time.

Occasionally, they listened to a sermon from some neighboring Baptist minister.

Rev. Joseph Grafton, of Newton, and Ensign Lincoln, a lay member of the Third Baptist Church, Boston, were especially helpful. Without any formal church organization, they continued these meetings until near the close of the year 1817. On the seventeenth day of December in that year, those interested assembled at the house of Mr. Samuel Hancock, and constituted themselves into a Christian Church by adopting and signing a Declaration of Faith

and Church Covenant prepared by a committee previously appointed for that purpose.

On the twenty-fifth day of the same month, the newly constituted body was publicly recognized as the regular Baptist church of Cambridge by a council, of which Rev. Thomas Baldwin, D.D., was the moderator.

The constituent members were forty-six in number. Of these, twenty were received by letter from the Baptist church in Newton, of which Rev. Joseph Grafton was pastor.

Their names were as follows: David R. Griggs, Thomas Griggs, Beulah Griggs, Abagail Griggs, Lydia Griggs, Elizabeth Griggs, James Hovey, Ebenezer Hovey, Ann Hovey, Sally Hovey, Betsey Seaver, Sarah Everett, David Coolidge, Susan Coolidge, Cornelius Stone, Melenda Stone, Jerusha Stone, Lucinda Stone, Sarah R. Wyman, Ann Chamberlain.

Rev. Mr. Grafton, who was clerk of the church, says of these, "Never did a church dismiss such a number with fairer characters and with greater union and affection."

This is strong evidence that the mother church had faithfully reared her children. In six months, seven more were sent out to join the twenty constituent members. These were Deacon Elijah Corey and Mary Corey, Timothy Corey and Mary Corey, Josiah Coolidge and Mary Coolidge, and Miss Sally Hastings.

The remarks of Mr. Grafton in respect to the twenty apply equally well to these seven.

Of this number, some were residents of Watertown, some of Brookline, some of Brighton, and others of Cambridge. These men and women are gratefully remembered for their Christian character and the union and affection which they fostered in the church.

Taken together, they were men and women of faith, their

names worthy to be added to the roll of Hebrew worthies; for, while not "subduing kingdoms," they yet "wrought righteousness"; and verily they "stopped the mouths of lions" and "quenched the violence of fire," for the walls of their temple were raised in troublesome times.

The feeling of the community was strongly averse to their building a house of worship.

The lot on which the house was placed was obtained through a third party. So high ran the feeling of opposition that it produced estrangement between the man who procured the lot and a brother, which resulted in a dissolution of their partnership in business.

When the meeting-house was built, the enemies of the Baptists built near it a smoke-house, for the purpose, as was understood, of annoyance. The Baptists earnestly remonstrated. "Poor fellows," said a well-known citizen, "they should not feel so bad,—rather be thankful for the smell of the ham, as few of them are able to have the article in their houses." The nuisance was, however, soon removed. The church prospered, gaining in number, usefulness, and influence.

In February, 1821, Timothy Corey, Mary Corey, Thomas Griggs, David Coolidge, and Susan Coolidge were dismissed to aid in forming a Baptist church in Roxbury (now the Dudley Street Church, Boston).

It is an interesting fact that Thomas Griggs came from the Newton church to aid in forming a Baptist church in Cambridge, and from Cambridge to aid in forming a Baptist church in Roxbury, and from Roxbury to aid in forming a Baptist church in Brookline, where he still lives, an honored member and officer of the church.

In 1822, Miss Beulah Griggs was dismissed to the fellowship of the Roxbury church.

In June, 1828, a Baptist church was formed in Brookline ; and Elijah Corey and Mrs. Corey, David Coolidge, and Mrs. Coolidge were dismissed to become constituent members.

In August, 1830, John Coolidge, Jerusha Stone, Melinda Stone, Susan Coolidge, Lucinda Olney (formerly Stone), were dismissed to aid in forming a Baptist church in Watertown.

In June, 1844, Josiah Coolidge and Mary Coolidge were dismissed to aid in the formation of the Baptist church in Old Cambridge.

David R. Griggs was dismissed to the Third Baptist Church, Boston.

Mrs. Ann Chamberlain was dismissed in 1840 to the Baptist church in Southboro. Miss Sarah Hastings was dismissed to the Baptist church in Worcester. Lydia Griggs in 1840 was dismissed to the Baptist church in Brookline.

For neglect of covenant obligations, the hand of fellowship was withdrawn from Sarah R. Wyman.

Abagail Griggs was dismissed to a church of another denomination, receiving a certificate of earnest Christian character.

James Hovey, Ebenezer Hovey, Cornelius Stone, Anna Stone, Sally Hovey, Sarah Everett, Betsey Seaver, and Elizabeth Griggs continued their connection with the Cambridge church until called to the church above.

Thus have we endeavored to account for the twenty-seven members of whom so favorable a record was made by their Newton pastor at the time of their dismissal.

The summing up is as follows :—

Dismissed to aid in the formation of other churches,	13
Dismissed to established churches,	4
Dismissed to another denomination,	1
Fellowship withdrawn from,	1
Died while connected with us,	8

More than threescore years have passed; and but two, so far as we can learn, Deacon Thomas Griggs of Brookline and Mrs. Mary Coolidge of Watertown, remain to recall the events of the past years, and to witness in the increase of churches in our midst the blessing of the Lord on their efforts and on his Word.

They were a noble band; and passing, as most of them have, from time, they, with those remaining, shall hear, beyond earthly commendations, the heavenly: "Well done good and faithful servants! enter ye into the joy of your Lord."

Twenty-six members (but see Historical Discourse, p. 27) of the Baptist church in Newton were dismissed in 1826 to unite with others in forming the First Baptist Church, Lowell, Mass.; but, through an oversight of the Committee of Arrangements, no invitation was sent to that church to be represented at our centennial anniversary. The oversight has been an occasion of much regret to the Committee. It may be added that some of the Newton constituents of the First Baptist Church, Lowell, became afterward constituent members of Worthen Street Baptist Church, Lowell, which was represented at the anniversary.

A. H.

ADDRESS BY REV. DR. FURBER,

PASTOR OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, NEWTON CENTRE.

The first sermon I ever preached in Newton, I preached in this pulpit. The council that ordained me dined in your old meeting-house, the one in which Father Grafton preached, near the pond. The name of the street on which I have lived for twenty years is *Grafton Street.* All this shows that I have been under good Baptist influences from the beginning of my ministry. And I might go back still further, and say that the man who now stands at the head of the Theological Institution in this place was a classmate of mine in college.

The occasion of my first sermon being preached in this pulpit was that your congregation and ours were at that time worshipping together. Our people were building a new meeting-house, and were enjoying for many months the hospitality to which you had kindly invited them. And repeatedly during all these years such hospitality has been given and received promptly and cordially on both sides. Beside this, we have met together regularly twice a year on Fast Days and Thanksgiving Days, and have had many union meetings in seasons of special religious interest.

These things have had a good influence in promoting acquaintance and Christian fellowship.

My relations with the professors in the Theological Institution have always been pleasant. I gratefully recall kind

words spoken to me many years ago by Drs. Sears, Ripley, Hackett, and Chase, intended on their part, no doubt, as encouragements to a young man just beginning his work. It is sometimes thought to be hard to preach to ministers and theological professors; but my impression is that, while they are pretty sure to detect a preacher's faults, they are more likely than others to give him credit for what is really good in his sermon, and are less dependent for their appreciation of it on what is merely adventitious, such as personal appearance, and voice, and delivery.

I have known Dr. Hovey longer perhaps than any of you; and as I compare what he is now and the position he holds with what he was as a young man, entering the Freshman Class in Dartmouth College forty-one years ago, I feel that I have before me a conspicuous and stimulating example of what steady, persistent, unintermitted industry can do.

Dr. Stearns and I worked side by side like brothers for thirteen years. In the revival of 1858 there was a warming of hearts at the union meetings. We prayed for one another and with one another, we rejoiced in each other's prosperity, and we felt the blessedness of the tie which binds hearts together in Christian sympathy and love. When Brother Clarke came here, he was younger than I; and I hardly thought we should ever come so closely together as Brother Stearns and I have done. But, as I came more and more to know him, I gave him my confidence, and he gave me his; and the gift has never been recalled on either side. We have been to each other like Homer Street and Grafton Street. They begin a little way apart, as you know, but come gradually nearer to each other till they merge in one. As to these two brethren, Dr. Stearns and Dr. Clarke, I never had a word of dissension with either of them. I never had a feeling of coldness or distrust toward

either of them. I never suspected the sincerity of their friendship or the genuineness and nobleness of their Christian magnanimity. If they are sectarian, I have not found it out. If under any stress of temptation they would violate the rules of denominational courtesy, then I have misjudged them. It has been a very happy thing for me to have such neighbors, and it has been a great blessing to you to have such ministers. Thank God for them. Thank God for such a man as Dr. Ripley, who was one of the saints, and one of the few who carry the sanctity of heaven about with them while they are here on earth. Thank God, too, for a man of wealth, who consecrated his money to the Lord, and knew how to use it for his glory. Give thanks for all the souls you have gathered, for the peace and unity you have had, and for all the good and true men God has given you to be his witnesses, and to stand fast by the truth as it is in Jesus.

This has been an inspiring day to you. The retrospect of the hundred years that are gone should not only awaken your gratitude, but it should stir in your hearts new hope and courage for the future; for your own history teaches you that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

REMARKS OF H. LINCOLN CHASE,

DELEGATE FROM THE BROOKLINE BAPTIST CHURCH.

The church at Brookline desire me to offer you their most hearty congratulations.

The cordial relations established many years ago between these churches by those sturdy, God-fearing men who once worshipped here, but afterwards at Brookline, have continued to this moment; and it affords us very great satisfaction to join in the celebration of this day. We recall honored names, familiar as household words to you and to us, who here toiled and sacrificed, and rejoice in the conspicuous example they have furnished of fidelity to Christian principle and duty, and in the opportunity this day has given to speak in their praise and honor. We rejoice in all the good accomplished by a hundred years of Christian effort, and in the bright prospects of the future; and it is our earnest and our best wish for you that they may be realized.

But, in addition to the congratulations which I bring to you as a delegate, there are memories of a personal nature which come trooping before my mind.

This was the religious home of my boyhood and of my early manhood. Here my parents worshipped. I am myself a child of this church, having received baptism at the hand of my revered father, in yonder lake, very early in life; and it was here, in after years, that I received those impressions,

since ripened into convictions, as to the Christian Church, and the entire harmony of the views held by our denomination with true Christian fellowship. And, that such fellowship may exist independent of church connections, the relations existing between this and the neighboring Congregational Church, referred to in the admirable address of the previous speaker, Dr. Furber, afford a most practical and delightful illustration. There has been no sacrifice of principle on either side, but a genuine regard for each other's convictions, and hence mutual respect and confidence. So may it ever be.

There is one other point to which I will venture to refer briefly. Reference has been made to the somewhat peculiar position of a church situated as this is, in close proximity to the Institution.

It is an open secret that laymen here have sometimes shrunk from active participation in church affairs, especially in the social meetings, under an impression that those connected with the Institution might regard their efforts in somewhat of a critical or an unsympathetic spirit. Permit me to say that this feeling is, in my judgment, altogether a mistake.

My own experience, when a member here, convinces me that there is really nothing in the fact of the connection of the Institution with the church to check for one moment any desire to be useful.

The professors and students, alike with those of us engaged in active business life, need the influence of the social meetings; and while they may be able to enrich us from their more ample intellectual resources, and by reason of their special attention to religious themes, still they need to know, and I am sure they rejoice to know, the experiences of their brethren, and it is for their good, as well as for the benefit of

all, that they should participate in all the Christian activities of this church. May God bless you in all your plans for advancing his cause here and throughout the world!

After the remarks of Mr. Chase, Deacon E. Davis White, now of Westboro', was invited to speak of events in the past, of which few beside himself had any personal knowledge. This he did in a manner that would have gratified the large assembly, if his words could have been heard by all. But, owing to the feebleness of his voice, only a small number of those present could follow him as he related incidents about Father Grafton, Deacons Richardson, King, and Stone, Dr. Smith, and other men who were active in the church thirty, forty, or fifty years ago.

The Chairman then read the following letter: —

LETTER FROM REV. HENRY F. COLBY,

OF DAYTON, OHIO.

DAYTON, OHIO, Nov. 9, 1880.

TO THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF NEWTON:

Dear Brethren, — I cheerfully comply with the suggestion of one of your number that I should send you a few words of fraternal greeting on the celebration of your centennial anniversary. With you are associated some of the most precious incidents of my life; and my heart would be dull indeed, if it did not join in your thanksgivings to God for all the mercies of the past. I am permitted also to join with my own the congratulations of Deacon Caleb Parker and of his wife, Mrs. Susan Richards Parker, who must be among the oldest survivors of those who have been members of your church. Deacon Parker was baptized by Father Grafton in the Baptist Pond sixty years ago, and Mrs. Parker a few years earlier. They cherish lively recollections of the old barn-like meeting-house on the shore of the pond, where they sat under the ministry of that good and genial man, and where they participated in many religious meetings of peculiar tenderness. Having joined the church in his seventeenth year, Mr. Parker was accustomed to walk every Sunday four miles from his home to attend the worship; and he remembers how, during the noon intermission, those from a distance gathered around the stove which stood in the centre of the meeting-house. They recall the names of Deacon Hovey, Mr. Corey, who afterwards became a deacon of the Brookline

church, Mr. Coolidge from Watertown, and Mrs. Captain Bacon, among those who were leaders of the little band at that time. When some withdrew to form the church at Cambridge, Father Grafton remarked, with a playful allusion to his own name, that now the branches of Joseph's bough had run over the wall.

Other reminiscences of Father Grafton are related by our venerable friends. Before settling at Newton, he had been called to another place. As the call was far from unanimous, he declined it, but continued to preach for the church until a revival occurred, and then the call was given unanimously. This also he declined, and soon after came to Newton, where he was cordially received at the outset. When asked why he had declined the unanimous invitation of the former church, he said: "In a time of freshet, you cannot see any of the stumps in a meadow. They are all covered out of sight. But, when the flood subsides, you will find they are still there. It is not well to accept a call given in time of high water." At another time, when Dr. Sharp had been prevented from keeping an appointment to preach at Watertown, Father Grafton was sent for to fill his place. He prefaced his discourse by saying, "My friends, those of you who are musicians know that there must be flats as well as sharps. As Dr. Sharp cannot be here, you must put up with a flat." About the time that Mr. Willard became a colleague of Father Grafton, Mr. and Mrs. Parker, having been married by the latter, removed their membership to the Roxbury church; but the thought of their aged and affectionate pastor at Newton has accompanied them through life as a constant benediction.

To these ancient items of interest, it seems scarcely worth while for me to add any reflections of my own: they must pertain to matters of so much later date. But in my mem-

ory forever must stand the white meeting-house, as it was in my childhood, with its short, square tower and broad front steps. I attended for a time Mr. Burbank's school, which was held in the basement, and the churchyard was then my playground. I recall how on Sundays I sat in one of the high pews, looking up, while

> "The meeting-house windows, blank and bare,
> Stared at me with a spectral glare,"

and how I tried to count the little balls which, like the bells and pomegranates on the high priest's robe, trimmed the faded draperies behind the pulpit. In the vestry beneath, I was a member of Mrs. Ripley's Sunday-school class, and attended the prayer-meetings at which many solemn impressions were made upon my mind. Beside Dr. Smith and some of the professors and students, there rise up before my mind now Mr. Parkhurst, Mr. Whitney, Mr. Lothrop, and others, as participating in the prayers and exhortations. To the same place, too, I came with my father to attend a Sunday morning prayer-meeting, at which he overcame his diffidence and took part in the exercises. I was still a boy when the church was remodelled. My parents were so interested in the project, and had so much to say about it at home, that we boys caught something of their enthusiasm; and, as I was then a pupil at the public school near by, I watched from day to day the progress of the building. In the mean while, Dr. Stearns had become our pastor. As I grew older, I felt my conscience and heart impressed by the great truths of our faith, which he so glowingly presented. When the new chapel was built, it soon became, like the old vestry, a place of sacred associations. Within its walls, I first avowed my purpose to be a servant of Christ, and asked an interest in the prayers of God's people. There, too, I taught my first Sunday-school class, and tremblingly offered my first prayer

in public. How much indeed have all our family been indebted to influences that clustered around that church! How large and sanctifying an element were thoughts and cares concerning it in the life and character of him who has now passed into the presence of his Lord! What affectionate esteem he cherished for its members! What anxiety he felt for its welfare!

As I pause in the work of my ministry to send you my greeting from this distant city, I am reminded that the sons and daughters of the Newton Centre Church are scattered throughout our land and in heathen lands. The growing needs of your community, brethren, demand that you should soon have a new and larger place of worship; but, in the memories of these absent ones, no building can take the place of the old one. What if its walls could *speak!* What if some phonograph had treasured up the solemn instructions, the tearful appeals, the sounds of mourning, and the glad hallelujahs which through all these years have there been uttered, and could pour them forth again in your hearing to-night! The very thought of such echoes from the past is *thrilling*. We cannot produce them to the outward ear, but we know that all that praying, praising breath has not been spent in vain, and that those dear servants of God who have departed are *ours still.* They are not only ours, to cherish their memories and emulate their virtues, but ours to *meet* at last in the glory of him with whom "a thousand years is as one day." "Wherefore, being compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and the finisher of our faith."

Your brother in Christ,

HENRY F. COLBY.

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